THE UNHAPPY FAVOURITE; OR, THE EARL of *ESSEX*. A TRAGEDY.

Written by JOHN BANKS, Author of the *Innocent Uſurper*; or, *The Lady Jane Gray*.

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Et nimias poſcebat opes, numeroſa parabat
Excelſa turris tabulata, unde altior eſſet
Caſus & impulſa præceps immane ruina. Juv. Sat. 10.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DARBY in *Bartholomew-Cloſe*, A. BETTESWORTH in *Pater-noſter Row*, and F. CLAY without *Temple-Bar*; all in Truſt for *Richard*, *James*, and *Bethel Wellington*: And ſold alſo by *Ri. Caldwell* in *Newgate Street*. M.DCC.XXVIII. Price 1 s.

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B L

To the most High and most Illustrious

PRINCESS,

THE

Lady *ANNE*,

Daughter to his Royal Highness.

MADAM,

I Humbly lay before your Highness's Feet an unhappy Favourite, but 'tis in your power to make him no longer so: Not his Queen's Repentance, nor her Tears could rescue him from the Malice of his Enemies, nor from the Violence of a most unfortunate Death; but your Highness, with this unspeakable Favour, and so divine a Condescen-

ſion in protecting this once-pitied Hero, will make him live eternally; and thoſe who cou'd ſcarce behold him on the Stage without weeping, when they ſhall ſee him thus exalted, will all turn envious of his Fortune, which they can never think deplorable, while he is grac'd by your Highneſs. For my own part, I tremble to expreſs my Thanks in ſo mean a Language, but much more when I would pay my Tribute of juſt Praiſes to your Highneſs; 'tis not to be attempted by any Pen, Heaven has done it to a Miracle in your own Perſon, where are written ſo many admirable Characters, ſuch illuſtrious Beauties on a Body ſo divinely framed, that there is none ſo dull and ignorant that cannot read them plainly. And when you vouchſafe to caſt your Eyes on thoſe beneath you, they ſpeak their own Excellencies with greater Art and Eloquence, and attract more Admiration than ever *Virgil* did in his divineſt Flight of Fancy, than *Ovid* in ſpeaking of his Princeſs, or *Apelles* in drawing of his *Venus*. Nor are your Virtues or your Royal Blood leſs admirable, ſprung from the ineſtimable Fountain of ſo many illuſtrious *Plantagenets*, that I ſtand amazed at the Mightineſs of the Subject which I have choſen: Beſides, the awful Genius of your Highneſs bids me beware how I come too near, leſt I profane ſo many incomparable Perfections in ſo ſacred a Shrine as your Highneſs's Perſon, where you ought to be ador'd, and not ſeen: For, like the antient *Jews* in their religious Worſhip, 'tis a Favour for me to remain on the

outward Steps, and not approach nigh the Veil where the Crowd never come. This, most illustrious Princess, ought to check my Hand, lest in attempting your Highness's Character, my Apprehension of the Excellence of the Subject, and the Danger of miscarrying, should make my Fancy sink beneath so glorious a Burden: therefore I will forbear troubling your Highness any further with the Rashness of my Zeal; nor dare I be dictated any longer by it, but will conclude, in hopes that when hereafter I may chance to record the Memory of a Princess, whose Beauty, Fortune, and Merits are greater than *Homer* ever feign'd, or *Tasso* copy'd, I may have leave to draw her Pattern from your Highness; and when that is done, the rest of my Life shall be employ'd in Prayers for your eternal Happiness, which be pleased to interpret as the Duty of,

MADAM,

Your Highness's most Obedient,

Most Humble, and

Most Devoted Servant,

J. BANKS.

PRO-

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Major *Mohun*, the first four Days.

THE Merchant, joyful with the Hopes of Gain,
Ventures his Life and Fortunes on the Main;
But the poor Poet, oftner does expose
More than his Life, his Credit, for Applause;
The Play's his Vessel, and his Venture Wit,
Hopes are his Indies, *Rocks and Seas the Pit.*
Yet our good-natur'd Author bids me swear
He'll court you still, the more his Fate draws near;
And cannot chuse but blame their feeble Rage,
That crow at you upon their Dunghil-Stage:
A certain Sign they merit to be curst,
When, to excuse their Faults, they cry Whore first.
So oft in their dull Prologues 'tis expresst,
That Critick now's become no more a Jest;
Methinks Self-Int'rest in 'em more should rule,
There's none so impudent to ask a Dole,
And then to call his Benefactor Fool.
They merit to be damn'd as well as poor;
For who that's in a Storm, and hears it roar,
But then would pray, that never pray'd before?
Yet Seas are calm sometimes; and you like those,
Are necessary Friends, but curst Foes.
But if amongst you all he has no Friend,
He humbly begs that you would be so kind,
Lay Malice by, and use him as you find.

PRO-

PROLOGUE,

Spoken to the King and Queen at their coming to the Houſe:

Written on purpoſe, by Mr. DRYDEN.

WHEN firſt the Ark was landed on the Shore,
And Heav'n had vow'd to curſe the Ground no more;
When Tops of Hills the longing Patriarch ſaw,
And the new Scene of Earth began to draw;
The Dove was ſent to view the Waves Decreaſe,
And firſt brought back to Man the Pledge of Peace.
'Tis needleſs to apply, when thoſe appear
Who bring the Olive, and who plant it here.
We have before our Eyes the Royal Dove,
Still innocent, as Harbinger to Love;
The Ark is open'd to diſmiſs the Train,
And people with a better Race the Plain.
Tell me, you Powers, why ſhould vain Man purſue
With endleſs Toil, each Object that is new,
And for the ſeeming Subſtance leave the true?——
Why ſhould he quit for Hopes his certain Good,
And loath the Manna of his daily Food?
Muſt England *ſtill the Scene of Changes be,*
Toſt and tempeſtuous like our ambient Sea?
Muſt ſtill our Weather and our Wills agree?
Without our Blood our Liberties we have,
Who that is free would fight to be a Slave?
Or what can Wars to After-times aſſure,
Of which our preſent Age is not ſecure?
All that our Monarch would for us ordain,
Is but t' enjoy the Bleſſings of his Reign.
Our Land's an Eden, *and the Main's our Fence,*
While we preſerve our State of Innocence:
That loſt, then Beaſts their Brutal Force employ,
And firſt their Lord, and then themſelves deſtroy.
What Civil Broils have coſt, we know too well,
Oh let it be enough that once we fell;
And every Heart conſpire, with every Tongue,
Still to have ſuch a King, and this King long.

Dra-

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE Earl of *Essex*,	Mr. *Clark*.
Earl of *Southampton*,	Mr. *Griffin*.
Burleigh,	Major *Mohun*.
Sir *Walter Raleigh*,	Mr. *Disney*.
Lieutenant of the Tower.	

Queen *Elizabeth*,	Mrs. *Quin*.
Countess of *Rutland*, secretly married to the Earl of *Essex*,	Mrs. *Cooke*.
Countess of *Nottingham*,	Mrs. *Corbet*.

Women, Gentlemen, Guards and Attendants.

SCENE, *Whitehall* and the *Tower*.

THE

THE UNHAPPY FAVOURITE; OR, The Earl of *ESSEX*.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Countess of Nottingham, *and* Burleigh, *at several Doors. The Countess reading a Letter.*

Not. HELP me to rail, prodigious minded *Burleigh*,
Prince of bold *English* Councils; teach me how
This hateful Breast of mine may dart forth Words,
Keen as thy Wit, malicious as thy Person:
Then I'll caress thee, stroke thee into Shape;
This rocky dismal Form of thine, that holds
The most Seraphick Mind that ever was,
I'll heal, and mould thee with a soft Embrace;
Thy Mountain-Back shall yield beneath these Arms,
And thy pale wither'd Cheeks that never glow,
Shall then be deck'd with Roses of my own——
Invent some new strange Curse, that's far above
Weak Woman's Rage, to blast the Man I love.

Burl.

Burl. What means the faireſt of the Court? ſay what
More cruel Darts are forming in thoſe Eyes
To make adoring *Cecil* more unhappy.
If ſuch a wretched and declar'd hard Fate
Attends the Man you love, what then, bright Star,
Has your malignant Beauty yet in ſtore
For him that is this Object of her Scorn?
Tell me that moſt unhappy happy Man,
Declare who is the moſt ungrateful Lover;
And to obey my lovely *Nottingham*
I will prefer this dear Cabal, and her
To all the other Councils in the World:
Nay, tho the Queen and her two Nations call'd,
And ſinking *England* ſtood this hour in need
For this ſupporting Head, they all ſhould ſue,
Or periſh all for one kind Look from you.

Not. There ſpoke the Genius and the Breath of *England*,
Thou *Æſculapius* of the Chriſtian World!
Methinks the Queen, in all her Majeſty,
Hem'd with a Pomp of ruſty Swords, and duller Brains,
When thou art abſent, is a naked Monarch,
And fills an idle Throne, till *Cecil* comes
To head her Councils, and inſpire her General——
Thy uncouth ſelf, that ſeems a Scourge to Nature
For ſo maliciouſly deforming thee,
Is by the heavenly Powers ſtamp'd with a Soul,
That, like the Sun, breaks thro' dark Miſts, when none
Beholds the Cloud, but wonders at the Light.

Burl. O ſpare that Angel's Voice till the laſt Day!
Such heavenly Praiſe is loſt on ſuch a Subject.

Not. Let none preſume to ſay, while *Burleigh* lives,
A Woman wears the Crown; fourth *Richard* rather,
Heir to the third in Magnanimity,
In Perſon, Courage, Wit, and Bravery all,
But to his Vices none, nor to his End
I hope.

Burl. You torture me with this Exceſs——
Were but my Fleſh caſt in a purer Mould,
Then you might ſee me bluſh: But my hot Blood,
Burnt with continual Thought, does inward glow;
Thought, like the Sun, ſtill goes its daily round,
And ſcorches, as in *India*, to the Root——

But

But to the wretched Cauſe of your Diſturbance;
Say, ſhall I gueſs? Is *Eſſex* not the Man?

Not. O! name not *Eſſex*, Hell and Tortures rather;
Poiſons and Vultures to the Breaſt of Man
Are not ſo cruel as the Name of *Eſſex*———
Speak, good my Lord? nay, never ſpeak nor think
Again, unleſs you can aſſuage this worſe
Than Fury in my Breaſt.

Burl. Tell me the Cauſe,
Then ceaſe your Rage, and ſtudy to revenge.

Not. My Rage! It is the Wings by which I'll fly
To be reveng'd——I'll ne'er be patient more.
Lift me my Rage, nay mount me to the Stars,
Where I may haunt this Peacock, tho he lies
Cloſe in the Lap of *Juno*——*Elizabeth*;
Tho the Queen circles him with Charms of Power,
And hides her Minion like another *Circe*.

Burl. Still well inſtructed Rage; but pray diſcloſe
The Reaſon of the Earl's Misfortune.

Not. You are,
My Friend, the Cabinet of all my Frailties;
From you, as from juſt Heaven, I hope for Abſolution:
Yet pray, tho Anger makes me red, when I
Diſcourſe the Reaſon of my Rage, be kind,
And ſay it is my Sex's Modeſty.
Know then,
This baſe imperious Man I lov'd, lov'd ſo,
Till lingring with the Pain of fierce Deſire,
And Shame, that ſtrove to torture me alike,
At laſt I paſt the Limits of our Sex,
And (O kind *Cecil*, pity and forgive me)
Sent this opprobious Man my Mind a Slave;
In a kind Letter broke the Silence of
My Love, which rather ſhould have broke my Heart.

Burl. But pray what Anſwer did you get from him?

Not. Such as has made an Earthquake in my Soul;
Shook e'ery Vital in theſe tender Limbs,
And rais'd me to the Storm you found me in.
At firſt he charm'd me with a thouſand Hopes,
Elſe 'twas my Love thought all his Actions ſo.——
Juſt now from *Ireland* I receiv'd this Letter,
Which take and read: But now I think you ſhall not;—

I'll tear it in a thousand pieces first,
Tear it, as I would *Essex* with my Will,
To Bits, to Morsels hack the mangled Slave,
Till ev'ry Atom of his cursed Body [*Tears the Letter*
Sever'd and flew like Dust before the Wind, [*in a Rage.*
Now do I bless the Chance, all else may blame
Me for revealing of my foolish Passion——
Did e'er I think these celebrated Charms,
Which I so often have been bless'd and prais'd for,
Should once be destin'd to so mean a Price,
As a Refusal!——Are there Friends above
That protect Innocence and injur'd Love?
Hear me, and curse me streight with wrinkled Age,
With Leprosy, Derision, all your Plagues
On Earth and Hell hereafter, if I'm not reveng'd.

Burl. Else say she is no Woman, or no Widow. [*Aside.*
The sacred Guardians of your slighted Beauties,
Have had more Pity on their lovely Charge,
Than to behold you swallow'd in his Ruin.
The best and worst that Fortune could propose
To you in *Essex'* Love, was to have brought
A helpless short-liv'd Traitor to your Arms.

Not. Ha! Traitor, say you! Speak that Word again—
Yet do not: 'tis enough if *Burleigh* says it;
His Wit has Power to damn the Man that thinks it,
And t'extract Treason from infected Thought.
The Nation's Safety like a Ship he steers,
When Tempests blow, rais'd by Designs of false
And ignorant Statesmen: by his Wit alone
They're all dispers'd, and by his Breath she sails,
His prosperous Counsel's all her gentle Gales.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. My Lord, the Queen expects you streight.

Burl. Madam,
Be pleased to attend her Majesty i'th' Presence,
Where you shall hear such Misdemeanours offer'd,
Such Articles against the Earl of *Essex*,
As will both glad the Nation and your self.

Gent. My Lord, I see the haughty Earl of *Southampton*
Coming this way.

Burl.

Burl. Madam, retire.

Not. I go,
With greater Expectation of Delight,
Than a young Bridegroom on his Marriage-Night.
[*Exit Countess of* Nottingham.

Burl. Southampton, he's the chief of *Essex'* Faction,
His Friend, and sworn Brother; and I fear
Too much a Friend and Partner of his Revels,
To be a Stranger of the other's Guilt——
'Tis not yet time to lop this haughty Bough,
'Till I have shaken first the Tree that bears it.

Enter Southampton.

South. My Lord, I hear unwelcome News: 'Tis said
Some factious Members of the House, headed
By you, have voted an Address for leave
T' impeach the Earl of *Essex* of strange Articles
Of Treason.

Burl. Treason, 'tis most true, is laid
To *Essex'* Charge; but that I am the Cause
They do me wrong, the Occasion is too publick:
For those dread Storms in *Ireland* rais'd by him,
Have blown so rudely on our *English* Coast,
That they have shipwreck'd quite the Nation's Peace,
And wak'd its very Statutes to abhor him.

South. Mere Argument; your nice and fine Distinction
To make a good Man vicious, or a bad
Man virtuous, ev'n as please the Sophisters——
My Lord, you are engendring Snakes within you.
I fear you have a subtle stinging Heart:
And give me leave to tell you, that this Treason,
If any, has been hatch'd in *Burleigh's* School.
I see Ambition in the fair Pretence,
Burleigh in all its cunning dark Disguises,
And envious *Cecil* every where.

Burl. My Lord, my Lord, your Zeal to this bad Earl
Makes you offend the Queen and all good Men.
Believe it, Sir, his Crimes have been so noted,
So plain and open to the State and her,
That he can now no more deceive the Eyes
Of a most gracious Mistress, or her Council;

Nor can she any longer, if she would,
In pity of his other Parts, let Justice wink,
But rouze herself from cheated slumbering Mercy,
And start at his most foul Ingratitude.
Nor does it well become the brave *Southampton*
To plead in his behalf; for fear it pulls
Upon himself Suspicion of his Crimes.

South. Hold in my Fire, and scorch not thro' my Ribs:
Quench, if thou canst, the burning furious Pain——
I cannot if I would, but must unload
Some of the Torture——Now by my wrong'd self,
And *Essex* much more wrong'd, I swear 'tis false;
False as the Rules by which vile Statesmen govern;
False as their Arts by which the Traitors rise,
By cheating Nations, and destroying Kings,
And false imposing on the common Crew.
Essex! ——By all the Hopes of my immortal Soul,
There's not one Drop of Blood of that brave Man,
But holds more Honour, Truth and Loyalty,
Than thy whole Mass besides, and all thy Brains
Stuff'd with Cabals and Projects for the Nation;
Than thou that seem'st a good St. *Christopher*,
Carrying thy Country's Genius on thy Back,
But art indeed a Devil, and takest more Hire
Than half the Kingdom's Wealth can satisfy.
I say again, that thou and all thy Race,
With *Essex'* base Accusers, every one
Put in a Scale together, weigh not half
The Merit that's in one poor Hair of his.

Burl. Thank you my Lord——See I can bear the Scandal,
And cannot chuse but smile to see you rage.

South. It is because thy guilty Soul's a Coward,
And has not Spirit enough to feign a Passion.

Burl. It is the Token of my Innocence——
But let *Southampton* have a special care
To keep his close Designs from *Cecil's* way,
Lest he disturb the Genius of the Nation,
As you were pleased to call me; and beware
The Fate of *Essex*. [*Exit* Burleigh.

South. Ha! The Fate of *Essex!*
Thou ly'st, proud Statesman, 'tis above thy reach;
As high above thy Malice as is Heaven

Beyond

Beyond a *Cecil's* Hopes —Despair not *Essex!*
Nor his brave Friends, since a just Queen's his Judge;
She that saw once such wonders in thy Person,
A scarce fledg'd Youth, as loading thee with Honours,
At once made thee Earl-Marshal, Knight o'th' Garter,
Chief Counseller, and Admiral at Sea———
She comes, she comes, bright Goddess of the Day,
And *Essex'* Foes she drives like Mists away.

Enter the Queen, Burleigh, *Lord Chancellor*, *Countess of* Nottingham, *Countess of* Rutland, *Lords and Attendants. Queen on a Chair of State, Guards.*

Queen. My Lords, we hear not any thing confirms
The new Designs were dreaded of the *Spaniards*;
Our Letters lately from our Agent there
Say nothing of such Fears, nor do I think
They dare.

Burl. To dare, most high illustrious Princess,
Is such a Virtue *Spaniard* never knew;
His Courage is as cold as he is hot,
And Faith is as adulterate as his Blood.
What Truth can we expect from such a Race
Of Mungrils, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, *Goths*, *Moors*,
And *Indians*, with a few old *Castilians*,
Shuffl'd in Nature's Mould together?
That *Spain* may truly now be called the Place
Where *Babel* first was built. These Men,
With all false Tenets chop'd and mash'd together,
Suck'd from the Scum of every base Religion,
Which they have since transform'd to *Romish* Mass,
Are now become the Mitre's darling Sons,
And *Spain* is call'd the Pope's most Catholick King.

Queen. Spoke like true *Cecil* still, old Protestant——
But ho! it joys me with the dear Remembrance
Of this Romantick huge Invasion
From the Pope's Closet, where 'twas first begot,
Bulls, Absolutions, Pardons frightful Banns,
Flew o'er the Continent and narrow Seas,
Some to reward, and others to torment;
Nay, worse, the Inquisition was let loose
To teach the very Atheists Purgatory;

Then were a thousand holy Hands employ'd,
As Cardinals, Bishops, Abbots, Monks and Jesuits;
Not a poor Mendicant, or begging Friar,
But thought he should be damn'd to leave the Work.

South. Whole Sholes of Benedictions were dispers'd;
Nay, the good Pope himself so wearied was
With giving Blessings to these holy Warriors
That flew to him from ev'ry Part as thick
As Hornets to their Nests, it gave his Arms
The Gout.

Burl. O faithless, incourageous Hands!
They should have been both burnt for Hereticks.

Queen. But when this huge and mighty Fleet was ready,
Altars were stripp'd of shining Ornaments;
Their Images, their Pictures, Palls, and Hangings,
By Nuns and *Persians* wrought,
All went to help their great Armada forth;
Relicks of all Degrees of Saints
Were there distributed, and not a Ship
Was bless'd without one: every Sail amongst 'em
Boasted to carry, as a certain Pledge
Of Victory, some of the real Cross.

South. Long live that Day, and never be forgotten
The gallant Hour, when to the immortal Fame
Of *England*, and the more immortal *Drake*,
That proud Armada was destroy'd: Yet was
The fight not half so dreadful as th' Event
Was pleasant. When the first Broad-sides were giv'n,
A tall brave Ship, the tallest of the rest,
That seem'd the Pride of all their big Half-Moon,
Whether by Chance, or by a lucky Shot
From us I know not, but she was blown up,
Bursting like Thunder, and almost as high,
And then did shiver in a thousand Pieces;
Whilst from her Belly Crouds of living Creatures
Broke like untimely Births, and fill'd the Sky.
Then might be seen a *Spaniard* catch his Fellow,
And wrestling in the Air, fall down together;
A Priest for Safety riding on a Cross,
Another that had none, crossing himself;
Friars with long big Sleeves, like Magpies Wings,
That bore them up, came gently sailing down;

One

One with a Don that held him by the Arms,
And cry'd, confess me straight; but as he just
Had spoke the Words, they tumbled down together.
Burl. Just Heaven, that never ceas'd to have a Care
Of your most Gracious Majesty and Kingdoms,
By valiant Soldiers, and by faithful Leaders,
Confounded in one Day the vast Designs
Of *Italy* and *Spain* against our Liberties:
So may *Tyrone* and *Irish* Rebels fall,
And so may all your Captains henceforth prove
To be as loyal and as stout Commanders.
Queen. Is there no fresher News from *Ireland* yet?
Burl. None better than the last, that seems too ill
To be repeated in your gracious Hearing.
Queen. Why, what was that?
South. Now now the subtile Fiend
Begins to conjure up a Storm. [*Aside.*
Burl. How soon your gracious Majesty forgets
Crimes done by any of your Subjects!
Queen. What?
That *Essex* did defer his Journey to
The North, and therefore lost the Season quite:
Was not that all?
Burl. And that he met *Tyrone*
At his Request, and treated with him private:
A Ford dividing them, they both rode in,
Wading their Horses knee deep on each side;
But that the Distance from each other was
So great, and they were forced to parly loud,
Orders were given to keep the Soldiers off;
Nay, not an Officer in all the Army
But was denied to hear what pass'd between them——
What follow'd then the Parley was the Truce,
So shameful (if I may be bold to call
It so) both to your Majesty and *England.*
Queen. Enough, enough, good *Cecil*, you begin
To be inveterate: 'Twas his first Fault;
And tho that Crime, done to the Nation's Hurt,
Admits of no Excuse or Mitigation
From the Author's many Virtues or Misfortunes,
Yet you must all confess that he is brave,
Valiant as any, and has done as much

For

For you, as e'er *Alcides* did for *Greece*:
Yet I'll not hide his Faults, but blame him too;
And therefore I have ſent him chiding Letters,
Forbidding him to leave the Kingdom, till
He has diſpatch'd the War, and kill'd *Tyrone*.

Enter Sir Walter Raleigh, *attended by ſome other Members of the Houſe.*

Burl. Moſt Royal Madam, here's the gallant *Raleigh*,
With others in Commiſſion from the Houſe,
Who attend your Majeſty with ſome few Bills
And humbleſt of Addreſſes, that you wou'd
Be pleas'd to paſs 'em for the Nation's Safety.

Queen. Welcome my People, welcome to your Queen,
Who wiſhes ſtill no longer to be ſo,
Than ſhe can govern well, and ſerve you all:
Welcome again, dear People, for I'm proud
To call you ſo; and let it not be boaſting
In me to ſay, I love you with a greater Love
Than ever Kings before ſhowr'd down on Subjects,
And that I think ne'er did a People more
Deſerve, than you. Be quick,
And tell me your Demands; I long to hear:
For know, I count your Wants are all my own.

Ra. Long live the bright Imperial Majeſty
Of *England*, Virgin-Star of Chriſtendom,
Bleſſing and Guide of all your Subjects Lives,
Who wiſh the Sun may ſooner be extinguiſh'd
From the bright Orb he rules in, than the Queen
Should e'er deſcend the Throne ſhe now makes happy.
Your Parliament, moſt bleſt of Sovereigns,
Calling to mind the Providence of Heaven
In guarding ſtill your People under you,
And ſparing your moſt precious Life,
Do humbly offer to your Royal Pleaſure
Three Bills to be made living Acts hereafter,
All for the Safety of your Crown and Life,
More precious than ten thouſand of your Slaves.

Queen. Let *Cecil* take and read what they contain.

[Cecil *takes the Papers, and reads the Contents.*

Burl. 'An Act for ſettling and eſtabliſhing

'A

'A strong Militia out of every County;
'And likewise for levying a new Army,
'Consisting of six thousand Foot at least,
'And Horse three thousand, quickly to be ready,
'As a strong Guard for the Queen's sacred Person,
'And to prevent what clandestine Designs
'The *Spaniards* or the *Scots* may have.'

Queen. Thanks to
My Dear and loving People; I will pass it.

Burl. This second Act is 'for the speedy raising
'Two hundred thousand Pound to pay the Army,
'And to be order'd as the Queen shall please;
'This to be gather'd by a Benevolence,
'And Subsidy, in six Months time from hence.'

Queen. What mean my giving Subjects! it shall pass.

Burl. The third has several Articles at large,
With an Address subscrib'd, most humbly offer'd,
For the impeaching *Robert* Earl of *Essex*
Of several Misdemeanours of High Treason.

Queen. Ha!
This unthought Blast has shock'd me like an Ague—
It has alarmed every Sense, and spoil'd me
Of all the awful Courage of a Queen. } *Aside.*
But I'll recover——
Say, my *Nottingham*,
And *Rutland*, did you ever hear the like!
But are you well-assur'd I am awake?
Bless me, and say it is a horrid Vision;
That I am not upon the Throne!——
Ha! Is't not so?——Yes, Traitors, I'll obey you——
[*She rises in a Rage.*
Here sit you in my Place; take *Burleigh*'s Staff,
The Chancellor's Seal, and *Essex*' valiant Head,
And leave me none but such as are yourselves,
Knaves for my Council, Fools for Magistrates,
And Cowards for Commanders——Oh my Heart!

South. Oh horrid Imposition on a Throne!
Essex, that has so bravely serv'd the Nation;
That I may boldly say, *Drake* did not more:
That has so often beat his Foes on Land,
Stood like a Promontory in its Defence,
And sail'd with Dragon's Wings to guard the Seas.

Essex!

Essex! That took as many Towns in *Spain*
As all this Island ho'ds; begger'd their Fleet
That came with Loads of half their Mines in *India*,
And took a mighty Carrack of such value,
That held more Gold in its prodigious Deck
Than serv'd the Nation's Riot in a Year.

Queen. Ingrateful People! Take away my Life:
'Tis that you'd have; for I have reign'd too long——
You too well know that I am a Woman, else
You durst not use me thus—— Had you but fear'd
Your Queen as you did once my Royal Father,
Or had I but the Spirit of that Monarch,
With one short Syllable I shou'd have ramm'd
Your impudent Petitions down your Throats,
And made four hundred of your factious Crew
Tremble, and grovel on the Earth for fear.

Ral. Thus prostrate at your Feet we beg for Pardon,
And humbly crave your Majesty's Forgiveness.

[*Petitioners kneel.*

Queen. No more—attend me in the House to-morrow.

Burl. Most mighty Queen! Bless'd and ador'd by all,
Torment not so your Royal Breast with Passion.
Not all of us, our Lives, Estates and Country,
Are worth the least Disturbance of your Mind.

Queen. Are you become a Pleader for such Traitors?
Ha! I suspect that *Cecil* too is envious,
And *Essex* is too great for thee to grow——
A Shrub that never shall be look'd upon,
Whilst *Essex*, that's a Cedar, stands so high——
Tell me, why was not I acquainted with
This close Design: For I am sure thou know'st it.

Burl. Madam——

Queen. Be dumb; I will hear no Excuses——
I could turn Cynick, and outrage the Wind,
Fly from all Courts, all Business, and Mankind,
Leave all like Chaos, in Confusion hurl'd;
For 'tis not Reason now that rules the World.
There's Order in all States but Man below,
And all things else do to Superiors bow:
Trees, Plants, and Fruits rejoice beneath the Sun,
Rivers and Seas are guided by the Moon;

The

The Lyon rules thro Shades and e'vry Green,
And Fiſhes own the Dolphin for their Queen:
But Man, the verier Monſter, worſhips ſtill
No God but Luſt, no Monarch but his Will.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT. II. SCENE I.

Counteſs of Eſſex.

C. *Eſſ.* IS this the Joy of a new married Life?
This all the Taſte of Pleaſures that are feign'd
To flow from ſweet and everlaſting Springs?
By what falſe Opticks do we view thoſe Sights,
And by our ravenous Wiſhes ſeem to draw
Delights ſo far beyond a Mortal's reach,
And bring 'em home to our deluded Breaſts?
'Tis not yet long ſince that bleſt Day was paſt,
A Day I wiſh that ſhould for ever laſt.
The Night once gone, I did the Morning chide,
Whoſe Beams betray'd me by my *Eſſex'* ſide;
And whilſt my Bluſhes, and my Eyes they bleſt,
I ſtrove to hide 'em in his panting Breaſt,
And my hot Cheeks cloſe to his Boſom laid,
Liſtning to what the Gueſt within it ſaid;
Where Fire to Fire the noble Heart did burn,
Cloſe like a Phenix in her ſpicy Urn:
I ſigh'd, and wept for Joy a Shower of Tears,
And felt a thouſand ſweet and pleaſant Fears,
Too rare for Senſe, too exquiſite to ſay;
Pain we can count, but Pleaſure ſteals away.
But Buſineſs now, and envious Glory's Charms,
Have ſnatch'd him from theſe ever-faithful Arms.
Ambition, that's the higheſt way to Woe,
Cruel Ambition! Love's eternal Foe.

Enter Southampton.

South. Thou deareſt Partner of my deareſt Friend,
The brighteſt Planet of thy ſhining Sex,

For-

Forgive me for the unwelcome News I bring——
Essex is come the most deplor'd of Men! ——

C. *Ess.* Now by the sacred Joys that fill my Heart,
What fatal Meaning can there be in that?
Is my Lord come? Say, speak.

South. Too sure he's come!——
But oh that Seas as wide as Waters flow,
Or burning Lakes as broad and deep as Hell,
Had rather parted you for ever,
So *Essex* had been safe on th' other side.

C. *Ess.* My Lord, you much amaze me——
Pray what of Ill has happen'd since this Morning,
That the Queen guarded him with so much Mercy,
And then refus'd to hear his false Impeachers?

South. Too soon, alas! he's forfeited his Honours,
Places and Wealth; but more, his precious Life:
Condemn'd by the too cruel Nation's Laws,
For leaving his Commission, and returning
When the Queen's absolute Commands forbad him.

C. *Ess.* Fond Hopes! Must then our Meeting prove so fatal?

South. Say, Madam, now what Help will you propose:
Can the Queen's Pity any more protect him?
Never, it is no longer in her power:
She must, tho 'gainst her Will, deliver him
A Sacrifice to all his greedy Foes.

C. *Ess.* Where is my Lord?

South. Blunt left him on the way,
And came disguised in haste to give me notice.

C. *Ess.* Let him go back, and give my *Essex* warning,
Conjuring him from us to stir no further,
But streight return to *Ireland*, ere 'tis known
He left the Place.

South. Alas! it is no Secret.
Besides, he left the Town almost as soon
As *Blunt*, and is expected every Moment.

C. *Ess.* How could it be revealed so suddenly?

South. I know not that, unless from Hell it came,
Where *Cecil* too is Privy-Counsellor,
And knows as much as any Devil there.
I met the cunning Fiend and *Raleigh* whispering;
And the fair treacherous *Nottingham*

I ſaw bedeck'd with an ill natur'd Smile,
That ſhew'd malicious Beauty to the Height.
C. *Eſſ.* Hold, hold, my Lord, my Fears begin to rack (me,
And Danger now in all its horrid Shapes:
Stalks in my way, and makes my Blood run cold,
Worſe than a thouſand glaring Spirits cou'd do.
Aſſiſt me ſtreight thou *Damon* to my *Eſſex*,
Help me thou more than Friend in Miſery——
I'll to the Queen, and ſtreight declare our Marriage;
She will have Mercy on my helpleſs State!
Pity theſe Tears, and all my humble Poſtures,
If not for me, nor for my *Eſſex*' ſake,
Yet for the Illuſtrious Offspring that I bear;
I'll go, I'll run, I'll hazard all this Moment.
[*Offers to be gone.*
South. Led by vain Hopes, you fly to your Deſtruction;
There wants but that dread Secret to be known,
To tumble you for ever to Deſpair,
And leave you both condemn'd without the Hopes
Of the Queen's Pity or Remorſe hereafter.
C. *Eſſ.* Curſt be the Stars that flatter'd at our Births,
That ſhone ſo bright, with ſuch unuſual Luſtre,
As cheated the whole World into belief
Our Lives alone were all the chiefeſt Care,
South. Be comforted, rely on *Eſſex*' Fate,
And the Queen's Mercy——
Behold ſhe comes, our evil Fate,
In diſcontented Characters, wrote on
Her Brow.

Enter the Queen, Burleigh, *Counteſs of* Nottingham, Raleigh, *Attendants, Guards.*

Queen. Is *Eſſex* then arriv'd?
Burl. He is.
Queen. Then he has loſt me all the flattering Hopes
I ever had to ſave him——[*Aſide.* Come, ſay you!
Who elſe came with him?
Burl. Some few Attendants.
Queen. Durſt the moſt vile of Traitors ſerve me thus!
Double my ſtrength about me, draw out Men,
And ſet a Guard before the Palace Gates,

And bid my valiant Friends the Citizens
Be ready ſtreight.——I ſhall be murder'd elſe,
And faithful *Cecil*, if thou lov'ſt thy Queen,
See all this done: For how can I be ſafe,
If *Eſſex* that I favour'd ſeek my Life?

Burl. Will't pleaſe your Majeſty to ſee the Earl?

Queen. No.

Burl. Shall I publiſh ſtraight your Royal Order,
That may forbid his Coming to the Court,
Untill your Majeſty command him?

Queen. Neither——
How durſt you ſee t'interpret what's my Pleaſure!
No, I will ſeem him if he comes, and then
Leave me to act without your ſaucy Aid,
If I have any Royal Power.

C. *Eſſ.* Bleſt be the Queen, bleſt be the pitying God
That has inſpir'd her. [*Aſide.*

South. Moſt admir'd of Queens,
Thus low unto the Ground I bend my Body,
And wiſh I cou'd ſink lower thro' the Earth,
To ſuit a Poſture to my humble Heart.
I tremble to excuſe my gallant Friend
In contradiction to your Heavenly Will;
Who like a God knows all, and 'tis enough
You think him Innocent, and he is ſo:
But yet your Majeſty's moſt Royal Soul,
That ſoars ſo high above the humble Malice
Of baſe and ſordid Wretches under you,
Perhaps is ignorant the valiant Earl
Has Foes, Foes that are only ſo, becauſe
Your Majeſty has crown'd him with your Favours,
And lifted him ſo far above their Sights,
That 'tis a Pain to all their envious Eyes
To look ſo high above him! and of theſe
Some grow too near your Royal Perſon,
As the ill Angels did at firſt in Heaven,
And daily ſeek to hurt this brave Man's Virtue.

Queen. Help me thou Infinite Ruler of all things,
That ſees at once as far as the Sun diſplays,
And ſearches every Soul of Human kind,
Quick and unfelt, as Light infuſes Beams,
Unites, and makes all Contradictions center,

And

And to the Sense of Man, which is more strange,
Governs innumerable distant Parts
By one intire same Providence at once:
Teach me so far thy Holy Art of Rule,
As in a mortal Reason may distinguish
Betwixt bold Subjects, and a Monarch's Right.

Burl. May't please your Majesty, the Earl is come,
And waits your Pleasure.

Queen. Let him be admitted———
Now, now support thy Royalty,
And hold thy Greatness firm: But oh how heavy
A Load is State where the free Mind's disturb'd!
How happy a Maid is she that always lives
Far from high Honour, in a low Content,
Where neither Hills nor dreadful Mountains grow,
But in a Vale where Springs and Pleasures flow;
Where Sheep lie round instead of Subjects Throngs,
The Trees for Musick, Birds instead of Songs;
Instead of *Essex* one poor faithful Hind,
She has a Servant, he a Mistress kind,
Who with Garlands for his Coming crowns her Door,
And all with Rushes strews her little Floor:
Where at their mean Repast no Fears attend
Of a false Enemy, or falser Friend;
No Care of Scepters, nor ambitious Frights
Disturb the Quiet of their Sleep at Nights———
He comes; this proud Invader of my Rest,
He comes: But I intend so to receive him———

Enter the Earl of Essex *with attendants.* Essex *kneels.*
The Queen turns to the Countess of Nottingham,

Essex. Long live the mightiest, most ador'd of Queens;
The brightest Power on Earth that Heaven e'er form'd;
Aw'd and amaz'd the trembling *Essex* kneels,
Essex that stood the dreadful Voice of Cannons,
Hid in a darker Field of Smoke and Fire,
Than that where *Cyclops* blows the Forge, and sweats
Beneath the mighty Hill, whilst Bullets round me
Flew like the Bolts of Heav'n when shot with Thunder,
And lost their Fury on my Shield and Corslet;
And stood these Dangers unconcern'd, and dauntless: I

But you the moſt Majeſtick brighteſt Form
That ever rul'd on Earth, have caught my Soul,
Surpriz'd its Virtues all with dread and wonder;
My humble Eyes durſt ſcarcely look up to you,
Your dazzling Mien and Sight ſo fill the Place,
And every Part Celeſtial Rays adorn.

Queen. Ha! [*Aſide.*

Eſſex. 'Tis ſaid I have been guilty——
I dare not riſe but crawl thus on the Earth,
Till I have leave to kiſs your Sacred Robes,
And clear before the juſteſt beſt of Queens
My wrong'd and wounded Innocence.

Queen. What ſaidſt thou, *Nottingham*? What ſaid the Earl? [*Aſide.*

Eſſex. What not a Word! a Look! not one bleſt Look:
Turn, turn cruel Brow, and kill me with (Look:
A frown; it is a quick and ſurer way,
To rid you of your *Eſſex*,
Than Baniſhment, than Fetters, Swords, or Axes——
What not that neither! Then I plainly ſee
My Fate, the Malice of Enemies,
Triumphant in their joyful Faces; *Burleigh*
With a glad Coward's Smile, that knows h'as got
Advantage o'er his valiant Foe, and *Raleigh*'s proud
To ſee his dreaded *Eſſex* kneel ſo long,
Eſſex that ſtood in his great Miſtreſs, Favour
Like a huge Oak, the loftieſt of the Wood,
Whilſt they no higher could attain to be,
Than humble Suckers nouriſh'd by my Root;
And like the Ivy twin'd their flattering Arms
About my Waſte, and liv'd but by my Smiles.

Queen. I muſt be gone: for if I ſtay, I ſhall
Here wreck my Conduct, and my fame for ever—
Thus the charm'd Pilot liſtning to the Sirens, } *Aſide.*
Lets his rich Veſſel ſplit upon a Rock.
And loſes both his Life and Wealth together.

Eſſex. Still am I ſhun'd as if I wore Deſtruction——
Here, here my faithful and my valiant Friends, [*Riſes.*
Deareſt Companions of the Fate of *Eſſex*,
Behold this Boſom ſtudded o'er with Scars,
This Marble Breaſt, that has ſo often held,
Like a fierce Battlement againſt the Foes

Of *England's* Queen, that made a hundred Breaches;
Here pierce it ſtreight, and thro' this Wild of Wounds
Be ſure to reach my Heart, this loyal Heart,
That ſits conſulting 'midſt a thouſand Spirits
All at command, all faithful to my Queen.

Queen. If I had ever Courage, Haughtineſs,
Or Spirit, help me but now, and I am happy!
He melts; it flows, and drowns my Heart with Pity,
If I ſtay longer, I ſhall tell him ſo——— *Aſide.*
What is this Traitor in my ſight!
All that have Loyalty, and love their Queen,
Forſake this horrid Wretch and follow me.

[Exeunt *Queen and her Attendants*, manet *Eſſex* ſolus.

Eſſex. She's gone and darted Fury as ſhe went———
Cruelleſt of Queens!
Not hear! not hear you Soldier ſpeak one Word!
Eſſex that was once all day liſten'd to;
Eſſex, that like a Cherub held thy Throne,
Whilſt thou didſt dreſs me with thy wealthy Favours,
Cheer'd me with Smiles, and deck'd me round with Glories;
Nor was thy Crown ſcarce worſhip'd on thy Head
Without me by thy ſide; but now are deaf
As Adders, Winds, or the remorſeleſs Seas;
Deaf as thy cunning Sex's Ears to thoſe
That make unwelcome Love——— What news, my Friend?

Enter Southampton.

South. Such as I dare not tell; but pardon me,
As an ill Bird that perches on the ſide
Of ſome tall Ship foretels a Storm at hand,
I come to give you warning of the Danger———
See *Cecil* with a Meſſage from the Queen.

Eſſex. Then does my Wreck come rolling on apace;
That foul Leviathan ne'er yet appear'd
Without a horrid Tempeſt from his Noſtrils.

Enter to them Burleigh *and* Raleigh.

Bur. Hear, *Robert* Earl of *Eſſex*.
Hear what the Queen, my Lord, by us pronounces:

She now diveſts you of your Offices,
Your Dignities of Governour of *Ireland*,
Earl Marſhal, Maſter of her Horſe, General
Of all her Forces both by Land and Sea,
And Lord Lieutenant of the ſeveral Counties
Of *Eſſex*, *Hereford* and *Weſtmoreland*.

Eſſex. A vaſt and goodly Sum, all at one Caſt
By an unlucky Hand thrown quite away.

Burl. Alſo her Pleaſure is, that in Obedience
To her Commands, you ſend your Staff by us,
Then leave the Court, and ſtir no farther than
Your Houſe, till order from the Queen and Council.

Eſſex. Thank my Misfortunes, for you fall with Weight
Upon me, and Fate ſhoots her Arrows thick;
'Tis hard if they find not one mortal Place
About me———

Burl. My Lord, what ſhall we tell her Majeſty?
What is your anſwer, for the Queen expects us?

Eſſex. Wilt thou then promiſe to be juſt, and tell her?
Give her a Caution of her worſt of Foes,
Thy greedy ſelf, the Land's infeſting Giant,
Exacting Heads from her beſt Subjects daily;
Worſe than the *Phrygian* Monſter, he was more
Cheaply compounded with, and but devour'd
Sev'n Virgins in a Week, and ſpar'd the reſt.

South. Hold, my brave Friend, and waſte not the Breath
Of *Eſſex* on ſo baſe and mean a Subject———
Thou Traitor to thy Sovereign and her Kingdoms,
More full of Guilt than e'er thou didſt deviſe
To lay on *Eſſex*, whom thou fear'ſt and hateſt;
And thou, becauſe thy ſordid Soul and Perſon
Ne'er fitted thee
For gallant Actions, think'ſt the World ſo too:
For he that looks thro' a foul Glaſs that's ſtain'd,
Sees all things ſtain'd like the foul Perſpective he uſes.
'Tis Crime enough in any to be valiant,
To win a Battle, or to be fortunate,
Whilſt thou ſtand'ſt by the Queen to intercept,
Or elſe determine Favours from her Hands.
'Tis not, who is to blame, or who deſerves,
Nor whom the Queen wou'd look on with a Grace,
But whom proud *Cecil* pleaſes to reward,

Or punish, and the Valiant never scape thee:
Curs'd be the Brave that fall into such Hands,
For Cowards still are cruel and malicious.

Burl. This I dare tell, and that *Southampton* said it.

South. And put her too in mind of thy vain Glories,
Such Impudence and Ostentation in thee,
And so much horrid Pride and Costliness,
As wou'd undo a Monarch to supply.

Essex. So thrives the lazy Gown, and such as sleep
On Woolsacks, and on Seats of injur'd Justice,
Or learnt to prate at Council-Tables: but
How miserable is Fortune to the Valiant!
Were but Commanders half so well rewarded
For all their Winter Camps, and Summer Fights,
Then they might eat, and the Poor Soldiers Widows
And Children too might all be kept from starving.

Ral. My Lord, in speaking thus you tax the Queen?
Of Weakness and Injustice both, and that
She favours none but worthless Persons.

Burl. Must we return this stubborn Answer to her?
You'll not obey her Majesty, nor here
Resign your Staff of Offices to us?

Essex. Tell her whate'er thy malice can invent;
Yet if thou say'st I'll not obey the Queen,
I tell thee, Lord,
'Tis false, false as thy most inveterate Soul
That looks thro' the foul Prison of thy Body,
And curses all she sees at liberty——
I tell thee, creeping Thing, the Queen's too good,
More merciful than to condemn a Slave,
Much less her *Essex*, without hearing him——
I will appeal to her——

Burl. You'll not believe us,
Nor that it was by her Command we came.

Essex. I do not.

Burl. Fare you well, my Lords.

[*Exeunt* Burleigh *and* Raleigh.

Essex. Go thou
My brave *Southampton*, follow to the Queen,
And quickly ere my cruel Foes are heard,
Tell her that thus her faithful *Essex* says,
This Star she deck'd me with, and all these Honours else

In

In one bleſs'd Hour, when ſcarce my tender Years
Had reach'd the Age of Man, ſhe heap'd upon me,
As if the Sun that ſows the Seeds of Gems
And Golden Mines had ſhower'd upon my Head,
And dreſt me like the Bridegroom of her Favour.
This thou beheldeſt, and Nations wonder'd at:
The World had not a Favourite ſo great,
So lov'd as I,

South. And I am Witneſs too
How many gracious Smiles ſhe bleſt 'em with,
And parted with a Look with every Favour
Was doubly worth the Gift, while the whole Court
Was ſo well pleas'd, and ſhew'd their wondrous Joy
In ſhouting louder than the *Roman* Bands
When *Julius* and *Auguſtus* were made Conſuls,

Eſſ. Thou canſt remember too, for all ſhe ſaid was
That at the happy time ſhe did inveſt (ſignal,
Her *Eſſex* with this Robe of ſhining Glories,
She bad me prize 'em as I wou'd my Life,
Defend 'em as I wou'd her Crown and Perſon;
Then a rich Sword ſhe put into my Hand,
And wiſh'd me *Ceſar's* Fortune; ſo ſhe grac'd me.

South. So young *Alcides*, when he firſt wore Arms,
Did fly to kill the *Erymanthean* Boar;
And ſo *Achilles*, firſt by *Thetis* made
Immortal, haſted to the Siege of *Troy*.

Eſſex. Go, thou *Southampton*, for thou art my Friend,
And ſuch a Friend's an Angel in diſtreſs;
Now the falſe Globe that flatter'd me is gone,
Thou art to me more Wealth, more Recompence
Than all the World was then——— Intreat the Queen
To bleſs me with a Moment's ſight,
And I will lay her Relicks humbly down,
As travelling Pilgrims do before the Shrines
Of Saints they went a thouſand Leagues to viſit;
And her bright Virgin Honours all untainted,
Her Sword not ſpoil'd with Ruſt, but wet with Blood,
All Nations Blood that diſobey'd my Queen;
This Staff that diſciplin'd her Kingdoms once,
And triumph'd o'er an hundred Victories;
And if ſhe will be pleas'd to take it, ſay,
My Life, the Life of once her darling *Eſſex*.

South. I fly, my Lord. and let your Hopes repoſe
On the kind Zeal *Southampton* has to ſerve you.
[*Exit* Southampton.

Eſſ. Where art thou *Eſſex!* where are now thy Glories?
Thy Summer's Garlands, and thy Winter's Laurels?
The early Sons that every Morning wak'd thee;
Thy Halls and Chambers throng'd with Multitudes,
More than the Temples of the *Perſian* God,
To worſhip thy upriſing; and when I appear'd,
The bluſhing Empreſs of the Eaſt, *Aurora*
Gladded the World not half ſo much as I:
Yeſterday's Sun ſaw his great Rival thus,
The ſpiteful Planet ſaw me thus ador'd,
And ſome tall built Pyramid, whoſe Height
And golden Top confronts him in his Sky,
He tumbles down with Lightning in his Rage;
So on a ſudden has he ſnatch'd my Garlands,
And with a Crown impal'd my gaudy Head,
Struck me with Thunder, daſh'd me from the Heavens;
And oh! 'tis Dooms-day now, and Darkneſs all with me;
Here I'll lie down——Earth will receive her Son.
Take pattern all by me, you that hunt Glory,
You that do climb the Rounds of high Ambition;
Yet when y'ave reach'd, und mounted to the Top,
Here you muſt come by juſt Degrees at laſt,
If not fall headlong down at once like me——
Here I'll abide cloſe to my loving Center:
For here I'm ſure that I can fall no further——

Enter Counteſs of Eſſex.

Ha! what makes thou here; tell me faireſt Creature;
Why art thou ſo in love with Miſery,
To come to be infected with my Woe,
And diſobey the angry Queen for me?

C. *Eſſ.* Bleſs me, my Angel, guard me from ſuch Sounds;
Is this the Language of a welcome Husband!
Are theſe fit Words for *Eſſex'* Bride to hear!
Bride I may truly call my ſelf, for Love
Had ſcarce beſtow'd the Bleſſings of one Night,
But ſnatch'd thee from theſe Arms.

Eſſ. My Soul! my Love!
Come to my Breaſt, thou pureſt Excellence,

And

And throw thy lovely Arms about my Neck,
More ſoft, more ſweet, more loving than the Vine.
Oh! I'm o'ercome with Joy, and ſink beneath
Thy Breaſt. [*They embrace.*

C. *Eſſ.* Take me along with thee, my Dear——
My *Eſſex*, wake my Love, I ſay:
I am grown jealous of each Bliſs without thee;
There's not a Dream, an Extaſy or Joy,
But I will double in thy raviſh'd Senſes.
Come, let's prepare, and mingle Souls together,
Thou ſhalt loſe nothing, but a Gainer be;
Mine is as full of Love as thine can be.

Eſſ. Where have I been! but yet I have thee ſtill——
Come ſit thee down upon this humble Floor,
It was the firſt kind Throne that Love e'er had.
Thus like the firſt bright Couple let's embrace,
And fancy all around is Paradiſe.
It muſt be ſo, for all is Paradiſe
Where thou remaineſt, thou lovelier far than *Eve*.

C. *Eſſ.* And thou more brave, and nobler Perſon far,
Than the firſt Man, who Heaven's peculiar Care
Made for a Pattern of ingenious Nature,
Which ne'er till thee excell'd the Original.

Eſſ. Thus when th' Almighty form'd the lovely Maid,
And ſent her to the Bower where *Adam* lay,
The firſt of Men awak'd, and ſtarting from
His moſſy flow'ry Bed whereon he ſlept,
Lifted his Eyes and ſaw the Virgin coming,
Saw the bright Maid that glitter'd like a Star,
Stars he had ſeen, but ne'er ſaw one ſo fair.
Thus did they meet, and thus they did embrace;
Thus in the Infancy of pure Deſire,
Ere Luſt, Diſpleaſures, Jealouſies and Fears
Debauch'd the World, and plagu'd the Breaſt of Man:
Thus in the Dawn of Golden Time, when Love,
And only Love, taught Lovers what to do.

C. *Eſſ.* O thou moſt dear, moſt priz'd of all Mankind,
I burn, I faint, I'm raviſh'd with thy Love;
The Fever is too hot,
It ſcorches, flames like pure Æthereal Fire,
And 'tis not Fleſh and Blood, but Spirits can bear it,
And thoſe the brighteſt of Angelick Forms.

Eſſ. That is thy ſelf, thy only ſelf, thou fairest;
There's not in Heaven ſo bright a Cherubim;
No Angel there but for thy Love would die:
The Thrones are all leſs happy there than I.

C. *Eſſ.* O my beſt Lord! the Queen, the Queen, my Love!
Ah, what have we committed to undo us,
The Pow'rs are angry, and have ſent the Queen,
The Jealous Queen of all our innocent Joys,
To drive us from our Paradiſe of Love;
And oh, my Lord! ſhe will not ere't be long
Allow us this poor Plat, this Ground to mourn on.

Eſſ. Weep not my Soul, my Love, my infinite All—
Ah! what cou'd I expreſs if there were Words
To tell how much, how tenderly my Thoughts
Adore thee——Ah! theſe Tears are drops of Blood,
Thy *Eſſex'* Blood, my World, my Heav'n, my Bride——
I, there's the Start of all my Joys beſide.
Bleſs'd that I am, that I can call thee Wife,
That loves ſo well, and is ſo well belov'd.

C. *Eſſ.* Ah! hold my Lord, what ſhall I ſay of you,
That beſt deſerves a Love ſo well you ſpeak of?

Eſſ. Again thou weepeſt—By Heav'n there's not a Tear
But weighs more than the Wealth of *England*'s Crown.
O thou bright Storer of all Virtues, were there
But ſo much Goodneſs in thy Sex beſide,
It were enough to ſave all Woman kind,
And keep 'em from Damnation——Still thou weepeſt—
Come let me kiſs thy Eyes, and catch thoſe Pearls,
Hold thy Cheeks cloſe to mine, that none may fall,
And ſpare me ſome of thoſe Celeſtial Drops.
Thus as two Turtles driven by a Storm,
Drooping and weary, ſhelter'd on a Bough,
Begin to join their melancholy Voices,
Then thus they bill, and thus renew their Joys,
With quiv'ring Wings, and cooting Notes repeat
Their Loves, and thus like us bemoan each other.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. Madam, the Queen expects you inſtantly.

C. *Eſſ.* Ah, what wou'd wiſh to be of Human kind!
Man in this Life ſcarce finds a Moment's Bliſs,
But counts a thouſand Pains for one ſhort Pleaſure,

And

And when that comes 'tis ſnatch'd away like ours.
Eſſ. Go my beſt Hopes, obey the cruel Queen——
I had forgot; thy Love, thy Beauties charm'd me.
Dearer than *Albion* to the Sailors Sight,
Whom many Yearr barr'd from his Native Country;
Looking on thee, I gaz'd my Soul away,
And quite forgot the dangerous Wrecks below——
Farewel—Nay then thou'lt ſoften me to Fondneſs——
The Queen may change, and we may meet again.
C. *Eſſ.* Farewel.
Eſſ. So have I ſeen a tall rich ſhip of *India*
Of mighty Bulk teeming with golden Ore,
With proſperous Gales come ſailing nigh the ſhore;
Her Train of Pendants borne up by the Wind;
The gladſome Seas proud of the lovely Weight,
Now lift her up above the Sky in Height,
And then as ſoon th' officious Waves divide,
Hug the gay Thing, and claſp her like a Bride;
Whilſt Fiſhes play, and Dolphins gather round,
And *Tritons* with their Coral Trumpets ſound;
Till on a hidden Rock at laſt ſhe's borne,
Swift as our Fate, and thus in pieces torn.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Counteſs of Nottingham, Burleigh.

Not. NOW, famous *Cecil*, *England* owes to thee
More than *Rome*'s State did once to *Cicero* pay,
That cruſht the vaſt deſigns of *Catiline*.
But what did he? Quell'd but a petty Conſul,
And ſav'd a Common wealth; but thou 'aſt done more,
Pull'd down a haughtier far than *Catiline*,
Thy Nation's ſole Dictator for Twelve Years,
And ſav'd a Queen and Kingdom by thy Wiſdom.
Burl. But what the *Roman* Senate then allow'd,
Nay and proud *Cicero* himſelf to *Fulvia*,
Fulvia the lovely Saver of her Country,
Muſt all and more be now aſcrib'd to you,

To

To the ſole Wit of Beauteous *Nottingham*;
But I will ceaſe and let the Nation praiſe thee,
And fix thy Statue high, as was *Minerva*'s,
The great *Palladium* that protected *Ilium*———
I came to attend the Queen, where is ſhe gone?
Not. She went to her Cloſet, where ſhe's now alone:
As ſhe paſt by, I ſaw her lovely Eyes
Clouded in Sorrow, and before ſhe ſpy'd me,
Sad Murmurs echo'd from her troubled Breaſt,
And ſtraight ſome Tears follow'd the mournful Sound,
Which, when ſhe did perceive me, ſhe'd have hid,
And with a piteous Sigh ſhe ſtrove to wipe
The Drops away, but with her haſte ſhe left
Some ſad Remains upon her dewy Cheeks.
Burl. What ſhould the Reaſon be?
Not. At *Eſſex*' Anſwer.
Burl. What ſaid ſhe then?
No doubt th' Affront had ſtung her!
But kind *Southampton*, faithful to his Friend
In all things, came, and with a cunning Tale,
Which ſhe too willingly inclin'd to hear,
Turn'd her to Mildneſs, and at his Requeſt,
Promis'd to ſee the Earl, and hear him ſpeak
To vindicate his Crimes, which bold *Southampton*
Declar'd to be his Enemies Aſperſions;
And now is *Eſſex* ſent for to the Court:
Not. Then I am loſt, and my Deſigns unravel'd:
If once ſhe ſees him, all's undone again———
Burl. Behold the Cloſet opens——ſee the Queen——
'Tis dangerous to interrupt her——let's retire.
Not. Be you not ſeen, I'll wait within her call.

Enter the Queen alone as from her Cloſet. [*Exit.* Burleigh, Not.

Queen. Where am I now? Why wander I alone?
What drags my Body forth without a Mind,
In all things like a Statue, but in Motion?
There's ſomething I would ſay, but know not what,
Nor yet to whom——O wretched State of Princes!
That never can enjoy nor wiſh to have,
What is but meanly in it ſelf a Crime:
But 'tis a Plague, and reigns thro' all the World.

Faults done by us are like licentious Laws,
Ador'd by all the Rabble, and are easier
And sooner far obey'd, than what are honest;
And Comets are less dreadful than our Failings——
Where hast thou been?
I thought, dear *Nottingham*, I'd been alone.

Not. Pardon this bold Intrusion, but my Duty
Urges me farther——on my Knees I first
Beg Pardon that I am so bold to ask it;
Then, that you wou'd disclose what 'tis afflicts you;
Something hangs heavy on your Royal Mind,
Or else I fear you are not well.

Queen. Rise, prithee——
I am in health and thank thee for thy Love,
Only a little troubl'd at my People.
I have reign'd long, and they're grown weary of me;
New Crowns are like new Garlands, fresh and lovely;
My Royal Sun declines towards its West,
They're hot, and tir'd beneath its Autumn Beams——
Tell me, what says the World of *Essex'* coming?

Not. Much do they blame him for't, but think him brave.

Queen. What, when the Traitor sery'd me thus!

Not. Indeed it was not well.

Queen. Not well, and was that all?

Not. It was a very bold and heinous Fault.

Queen. Ay, was it not? and such a base Contempt
As he deserves to die for; less than that
Has cost a hundred nearer Favourites Heads,
Since the first Saxon King that reign'd in *England*;
And lately in my Royal Father's time,
Was not brave *Buckingham* for less condemn'd,
And lost not *Wolsey* all his Church Revenues,
Nay and his Life too, but that he was a Coward,
And durst not live to feel the stroke of Justice?
Thou know'st it too, and this most vile of Men,
That brave *Northumberland*, and *Westmorland*,
For lesser Crimes than his were both beheaded.

Not. Most true——can *Essex* then be thought so guilty,
And not deserve to die?

Queen. To die! to wrack,
And as his Treasons are the worst of all Mens,
So I will have him plagu'd above the rest.

His

His Limbs cut off and plac'd to th' higheſt View,
Not on low Bridges, Gates, and Walls of Towns,
But on vaſt Pinacles that touch the Sky,
Where all that paſs may in Deriſion ſay,
Lo, there is *Eſſex*, proud ingrateful *Eſſex*!
Eſſex that brav'd the Juſtice of his Queen——
Is not that well? Why doſt not ſpeak,
And help the Queen to rail againſt this Man?

Not. Since you will give me leave, I will be plain,
And tell your Majeſty what all the World
Says of that proud ingrateful Man.

Qu. Do ſo: Prithee what ſays the World of him and me?

Not. Of you they ſpeak no worſe than of dead Saints,
And worſhip you no leſs than as their God,
Than Peace, than Wealth, or their Eternal Hopes;
Yet do they often wiſh with kindeſt Tears,
Sprung from the pureſt Love, that you'd be pleas'd
To heal their Grievances on *Eſſex* charg'd,
And not protect the Traitor by your Power,
But give him up to Juſtice and to Shame
For a Revenge of all your Wrongs, and theirs.

Queen. What, would they then preſcribe me Rules to govern!

Not. No more but with Submiſſion as to Heaven;
But upon *Eſſex* they unload Reproaches,
And give him this bad Character:
They ſay he is a Perſon (bating his Treaſons)
That in his nobleſt, beſt Array of Parts,
He ſcarcely has enough to make him paſs
For a brave Man, nor yet a Hypocrite;
And that he wears his Greatneſs and his Honours
Fooliſh and proud, as Lacquies wear gay Liveries:
Valiant they will admit he is, but then
Like Beaſts precipitately raſh and brutiſh,
Which is no more commendable in him
Than in a Bear, a Leopard, or a Wolf.
He never yet had Courage over Fortune,
And which to ſhew his natural Pride the more,
He roars and ſtaggers under ſmall Affronts,
And can no more endure the Pain than Hell?
Then he's as covetous, and more ambitious
Then that firſt Fiend that ſow'd the Vice in Heav'n,

And therefore was dethron'd and tumbl'd thence;
And ſo they wiſh that *Eſſex* too may fall.

Queen. Enough, thou'ſt rail'd thy ſelf quite out of Breath;
I'll hear no more—Bliſters upon her Tongue. [*Aſide.*
'Tis baſeneſs tho in thee but to repeat,
What the rude World maliciouſly has ſaid;
Nor dare the vileſt of the Rabble think,
Much leſs profanely ſpeak ſuch horrid Treaſons———
Yet 'tis not what they ſay, but what you'd have 'em.

Not. Did not your Majeſty command me to ſpeak?

Queen. I did, but then I ſaw thee on a ſudden,
Settle thy Senſes all in eager Poſtures,
Thy Lips, thy Speech, and Hands were all prepar'd,
A joyful Red painted thy envious Cheeks,
Malicious Flames flaſht in a Moment from
Thy Eyes like Lightning from thy o'er-charg'd Soul,
And fir'd thy Breaſt, which like a hard ramm'd Piece,
Diſcharg'd unmannerly upon my Face.

Not. Pardon bright Queen, moſt Royal and belov'd,
The manner of expreſſing of my Duty;
But you your ſelf began and taught me firſt.

Queen. I am his Queen, and therefore may have leave;
May not my ſelf have Privilege to mould
The Thing I made, and uſe it as I pleaſe?
Beſides, he has committed monſtrous Crimes
Againſt my Perſon, and has urg'd me far
Beyond the Power of mortal Suffering.
Me he has wrong'd, but thee he never wrong'd.
What has poor *Eſſex* done to thee? Thou haſt
No Crown that he cou'd hope to gain,
No Laws to break, no Subjects to moleſt
Nor Throne that he cou'd be ambitious of———
What Pleaſure cou'dſt thou take to ſee
A drowning Man knock'd on the Head, and yet
Not wiſh to ſave the miſerable Wretch!

Not. I was to blame.

Queen. No more——
Thou ſeeſt the Queen, the World, and Deſtiny
It ſelf againſt this one bad Man, and him
Thou canſt not pity nor excuſe.

Not. Madam———

Queen. Be gone, I do forgive thee; and bid *Rutland*
[*Exit Nottingham.*] Come

Come to me ſtraight: ha! what have I diſclos'd?
Why have I chid my Woman for a fault
Which I wrung from her and committed firſt?
Why ſtands my jealous and tormented Soul
A Spy to liſten and divulge the Treaſons
Spoke againſt *Eſſex?* O you mighty Powers!
Protectors of the Fame of *England's* Queen,
Let me not know it for a Thouſand Worlds,
'Tis dangerous —— but yet it will diſcover,
And I feel ſomething whiſpering to my Reaſon,
That ſays it is——O blotted be the Name
For ever from my Thoughts. If it be ſo,
And I am ſtung with the Almighty's Dart,
I'll die, but I will tear thee from my Heart,
Shake off this hideous Vapour from my Soul,
This haughty Earl, the Prince of my Controul;
Baniſh this Traitor to his Queen's repoſe,
And blaſt him with the Malice of his Foes;
Were there no other way his Guilt to prove,
'Tis Treaſon to infect the Throne with Love.

Enter the Counteſs of Eſſex.

How now my *Rutland?* I did ſend for you——
I have obſerv'd you have been ſad of late.
Why weareſt thou black ſo long? and why that Cloud,
That mourning Cloud about thy lovely Eyes?
Come, I will find a noble Husband for thee.

C. *Eſſ.* Ah! mighty Princeſs, moſt ador'd of Queens!
Your Royal Goodneſs ought to bluſh, when it
Deſcends to care for ſuch a Wretch as I am.

Queen. Why ſay'ſt thou ſo? I love thee well, indeed
I do, and thou ſhalt find by this 'tis Truth——
Injurious *Nottingham* and I had ſome
Diſpute, and 'twas about my Lord of *Eſſex*——

C. *Eſſ.* Ha! [*Aſide.*

Queen. So much that ſhe diſpleas'd me ſtrangely,
And I did ſend her from my Sight in Anger.

C. *Eſſ.* O that dear Name o'th' ſudden how it ſtarts me!
Makes every Vein within me leave its Channel,
To run and to protect my feeble Heart; *Aſide.*
And now my Blood as ſoon retreats again
To croud with Bluſhes full my guilty Cheeks——
Alas I fear. *Queen.*

Queen. Toou bluſheſt at my Story!
C. *Eſſ.* Not I, my gracious Miſtreſs, but my Eyes
And Cheeks, fir'd and amaz'd with Joy turn'd red
At ſuch a Grace as you was pleas'd to ſhew me.
Queen. I'll tell the then, and ask thee thy Advice;
There is no doubt, dear *Rutland*, but thou hear'ſt
The daily Clamours that my People vent
Againſt the moſt unhappy Earl of *Eſſex*,
The Treaſons that they would impeach him of;
And which is worſe, this day he is arriv'd
Againſt my ſtrict Commands, and left Affairs
In *Ireland*, deſperate, heedleſs, and undone.
C. *Eſſ.* Might I preſume to tell my humble Mind,
Such Clamours very often are deſign'd
More by the Peoples Hate than any Crimes
In thoſe they would accuſe.
Queen. Thou ſpeak'ſt my Senſe:
But oh, dear *Rutland!* he has been to blame——
Lend me thy Breaſt to lean upon—— O 'tis
A heavy Yoke they wou'd impoſe on me
Their Queen; and I am weary of the Load,
And want a Friend like thee to lull my Sorrows.
C. *Eſſ.* Behold, theſe Tears ſprung from fierce Pain and Joy,
To ſee your wondrous Grief, your wondrous Pity.
O that kind Heav'n wou'd but inſtruct my Thoughts,
And teach my Tongue ſuch ſoftning, healing Words,
That it might charm your Soul, and cure your Breaſt
For ever.
Queen. Thou art my better Angel then,
And ſent to give me everlaſting Quiet.——
Say, Is't not pity that ſo brave a Man,
And one that once was reckon'd as a God,
That he ſhould be the Author of ſuch Treaſons?
That he, that was like *Cæſar*, and ſo great,
Has had the Power to make and unmake Kings,
Shou'd ſtoop to gain a petty Throne from me?
C. *Eſſ.* I can't believe 'tis in his Soul to think,
Much leſs to act a Treaſon againſt You;
Your Majeſty, whom I have heard him ſo
Commend, that Angels Words did never flow
With ſo much Eloquence, ſo rare, ſo ſweet,
That nothing but the Subject cou'd deſerve.

Queen. Haſt thou then heard him talk of me?
C. *Eſſ.* I have;
And of ſo much Excellence, as if
He meant to make a rare Encomium on
The World, the Stars, or what is brighter, Heav'n.
She is, ſaid he, the Goddeſs of her Sex,
So far beyond all Woman-kind beſide,
That what in them is moſt ador'd and lov'd,
Their Beauties, Parts, and other Ornaments,
Are but in her the Foils to greater Luſtre;
And all Perfections elſe, how rare ſoever,
Are in her Perſon but as leſſer Gleams,
And infinite Beams that uſher ſtill the Sun,
But ſcarce are viſible amidſt her other Brightneſs.
And then ſhe is ſo good, it might be ſaid,
That whilſt ſhe lives a Goddeſs reigns in *England*;
For all her Laws are regiſter'd in Heaven,
And copy'd thence by her—— But then he cry'd,
With a deep Sigh fetch'd from his loyal Heart,
Well may the World bewail that time at laſt,
When ſo much Goodneſs ſhall on Earth be mortal,
And wretched *England* break its ſtubborn Heart.
Queen. Did he ſay all this?
C. *Eſſ.* All this! nay more,
A thouſand times as much; I never ſaw him
But his Diſcourſe was ſtill in praiſe of You;
Nothing but Raptures fell from *Eſſex*' Tongue;
And all was ſtill the ſame, and all was You.
Queen. Such Words ſpoke Loyalty enough.
C. *Eſſ.* Then does
Your Majeſty believe that he can be
A Traitor?
Queen. No, yet he has broke the Laws,
And I for ſhame no longer can protect him;
Nay, durſt not ſee him,
C. *Eſſ.* What! not ſee him, ſay you?
By that bright Star of Mercy in your Soul,
And liſtening thro' your Eyes, let me intreat;
'Tis good, 'tis God-like, and like *England*'s Queen;
Like only her to pity the diſtreſs'd——
Will you not grant that he ſhall ſee you once?
Queen. What he

That

That did defy my abſolute Commands,
And brings himſelf audaciouſly before me!

C. *Eſſ.* Impute it not to that, but to his Danger,
That hearing what Proceedings here had paſt
Againſt his Credit and his Life, he comes
Loyal, tho unadviſed, to clear himſelf.

Queen. Well, I will ſee him then, and ſee him ſtraight—
Indeed, my *Rutland*, I would fain believe
That he is honeſt ſtill, as he is brave.

C. *Eſſ.* O nouriſh that moſt kind Belief, 'tis ſprung
From Juſtice in your Royal Soul —— Honeſt!
By your bright Majeſty, he is faithful ſtill,
The pure and Virgin Light is leſs untainted?
The glorious Body of the Sun breeds Gnats,
Inſects that moleſt its curious Beams;
The Moon has Spots upon her Cryſtal Face,
But in his Soul are none——And for his Valour,
The Chriſtian World records its wondrous Story.
Baſeneſs can never mingle with ſuch Courage.
Remember what a Scourge he was to Rebels,
And made your Majeſty ador'd in *Spain*
More than their King, that brib'd you with his *Indies*,
And made himſelf ſo dreadful to their Fears;
His very Name put Armies to the Rout:
It was enough to ſay, Here's *Eſſex* come;
And Nurſes ſtill'd their Children with the Fright.

Queen. Ha! ſhe's concern'd, tranſported!
I'll try thee farther——Then he has a Perſon! [*Aſide.*

C. *Eſſ.* Ay, in his Perſon, there you ſum up all.
Ah! loveliеſt Queen, did you e'er ſee the like!
The Limbs of *Mars*, and awful Front of *Jove*,
With ſuch an Harmony of Parts as put
To bluſh the Beauties of his Daughter *Venus*,
A Pattern for the Gods to make a perfect Man by,
And *Michael Angelo* to frame a Statue
To be ador'd thro' all the wondring World.

Queen. I can endure no more——Hold, *Rutland*,
Thy Eyes are moiſt, thy Senſes in a hurry,
Thy Words come crouding one upon another.
Is it real Paſſion, or extorted?
Is it for *Eſſex*' ſake, or for thy Queen's,
That makes this furious Tranſport in thy Mind?

She loves him——Ah, 'tis ſo—— What have I done?
Conjur'd another Storm to wrack my Reſt?
Thus is my Mind with Quiet never bleſt,
But, like a loaded Bark, finds no Repoſe
When 'tis becalm'd, or when the Weather Blows.

Enter Burleigh, *Counteſs of* Nottingham, Raleigh, *Lords, Attendants and Guards.*

Burl. May't pleaſe your Majeſty, the Earl of *Eſſex*
Return'd by your Command, intreats to kneel
Before you.

Queen. Now hold my treacherous Heart;
Guard well the Breach that this proud Man has made—— } *Aſide.*
Rutland, we muſt defer this Subject till
Some other time——Come hither, *Nottingham*, }

Enter the Earls of Eſſex *and* Southampton *attended.*

Eſſex. Behold, your *Eſſex* kneel, to clear himſelf
Before his Queen, and now receive his Doom.

Queen. I muſt divert my Fears.——I ſee he takes the way
To bend the ſturdy Temper of my Heart—— [*Aſide.*
Well, my Lord, I ſee you can
Withſtand mine Anger, as you lately boaſted
You did your Enemies—— Were they ſuch Foes
As bravely did reſiſt, or elſe the ſame
You parly'd with? It was a mighty Courage.

Eſſex. Well, well, you cruel Fates! well have you found
The way to ſhock the Baſis of a Temper
That all your Malice elſe cou'd ne'er invent,
And you, my Queen, to break your Soldier's Heart.
Thunder and Earthquakes, Prodigies on Land
I've borne, devouring Tempeſts on the Seas,
And all the horrid Strokes beſide,
That Nature e'er invented: yet to me
Your Scorn is more—— Here take this Traitor,
Since you will have me ſo; throw me to Dungeons,
Laſh me with Iron Rods faſt bound in Chains,
And like a Fiend in Darkneſs let me roar;
It is the nobler Juſtice of the two.

Queen.

Queen. I see you want no cunning Skill to talk,
And daub with Words a Guilt you wou'd evade——
But yet, my Lord, if you wou'd have us think
Your Virtues wrong'd, wash off the Stain you carry,
And clear your self of parlying with the Rebels——
Grant Heav'n he does but that, and I am happy. [*Aside.*

Essex. My parlying with the Enemy!

Queen. Yes, your secret treating with *Tyrone*, I mean,
And making Articles with *England*'s Rebels.

Essex. Is that alledg'd against me for a Fault,
Put in your Royal Breast by some that are
My false Accusers for a Crime? Just Heaven!
How easy is it to make a Great Man fall?
'Tis wise, 'tis Turkish Policy in Courts.
For treating!
Am I not yet your General, and was
I not so there by virtue of this Staff?——
I thought your Majesty had given me Power,
And my Commission had been absolute,
To treat, to fight, give Pardons, or disband:
So much and vast was my Authority,
That you were pleas'd to say in Mirth to others,
I was the first of *English* Kings that reign'd
In *Ireland*.

Queen. Oh! how soon wou'd I believe
How willingly approve of such Excuses? } *Aside.*
His Answers, which to all the Croud are weak—}
That large Commission had in it no Power,
That gave you leave to treat with Rebels,
Such as *Tyrone*, and wanted not Authority
To fight 'em on the least Advantage.

Essex. The Reason why
I led not forth the Army to the North,
And fought not with *Tyrone*, was, that my Men
Were half consumed with Fluxes and Diseases,
And those that liv'd, so weakned and unfit,
That they cou'd scarce defend them from the Vultures
That took them for the Carrion of an Army.

Queen. Oh, I can hold no longer, he'll not hide } *Aside.*
his Guilt, }
I fear he will undo himself and me——
Name that no more for shame of thee the Cause,

Nor

Nor hide thy Guilt by broaching of a worse;
Fain I won'd tell, but whisper it in my Ear,
That none besides may hear, nay not my self,
How vitious thou hast been—Say, was not *Essex*
The Plague that first infected my poor Soldiers,
And kill'd 'em with Diseases? Was't not he
That loiter'd all the Year without one Action,
Whilst all the Rebels in the North grew bold,
And rally'd daily to the Queen's Dishonour?
Mean while thou stood'st and saw the Army rot
In fenny and unwholesom Camps——Thou hast
No doubt a just Excuse for coming too,
In spite of all the Letters that I sent
With my Commands to hinder thee——Be silent——
If thou makest more such impudent Excuse,
Thou'lt raise an Anger will be fatal to thee.

Essex. Not speak! must I be tortur'd on the Rack,
And not be suffer'd to discharge a Groan?
Speak! Yes I will, were there a thousand Deaths
Stood ready to devour me: 'tis too plain
My Life's conspir'd, my Glories all betray'd:
That Vulture *Cecil* there with hungry Nostrils
Waits for my Blood, and *Raleigh* for my Charge,
Like Birds of Prey that seek out fighting Fields,
And know when Battle's near: Nay, and my Queen
Has past her Vote, I fear, to my Destruction.

Queen. Oh! I'm undone! how he destroys my Pity!
Cou'd I bear this from any other Man?
He pulls and tears the Fury from my Heart
With greater Grief and Pain, than a fork'd Arrow
Is drawn from forth the Bosom where 'twas lodg'd. } *Aside.*
Mind Words are all in vain and lost upon him——
Proud and ingrateful Wretch, how durst thou say it?
Know, Monster, that thou hast no Friend but me,
And I have no Pretence for it but one,
And that's in contradiction to the World,
That curses and abhors thee for thy Crimes.
Stir me no more with Anger for thy Life,
Take heed how thou dost shake my Wrongs too much,
Lest they fall thick and heavy on thy Head.
Yet thou shalt see what a rash Fool thou art——

Know

Know then that I forgive thee from this Moment
All that is paſt, and this unequal'd Boldneſs,
Give thee that Life thou ſaidſt I did conſpire againſt——
But for your Offices——

Eſſ. I throw 'em at your Feet. [*Lays his General's Staff down.*

Now baniſh him that planted Strength about you,
Cover'd this Iſland with my ſpreading Laurels,
Whilſt your ſafe Subjects ſlept beneath their Shade.
Give 'em to Courtiers, Sycophants and Cowards,
That ſell the Land for Pence and Childrens Portions,
Whilſt I retreat to *Africk* in ſome Deſart,
Sleep in a Den, and herd with valiant Brutes,
And ſerve the King of Beaſts, there's more Reward,
More Juſtice there than in all Chriſtian Courts:
The Lion ſpar'd the Man that freed him from
The Toil, but *England*'s Queen abhors her *Eſſex*.

South. My Lord——

C. *Eſſ.* Ah, what will be the Event of this! [*Aſide.*

Queen. Audacious Traitor.

Eſſ. Ha!

South. My Lord, my Lord, recal your Temper.

Eſſ. You ſaid that I was bold, but now who blames
My Rage? Had I been rough as Storms and Tempeſts,
Raſh as *Cethegus*, mad as *Ajax* was,
Yet this has ramm'd more Powder in my Breaſt,
And blown a Magazine of Fury up——
A Traitor! Yes, for ſerving you ſo well:
For making *England* like the *Roman* Empire
In great *Auguſtus*' time; renown'd in Peace
At home, and War abroad; enriching you
With Spoils both of the wealthy Sea and Land,
More than your *Thames* does bring you in an Age,
And ſetting up your Fame to ſuch an Height,
That it appears the Column of the World;
For tumbling down the proud rebellious Earls,
Northumberland and *Weſtmorland*, which caus'd
The cutting both their Heads off with an Ax,
That ſav'd the Crown on yours—— This *Eſſex* did,
And I'll remove the Traitor from your ſight.

Queen. Stay Sir; take your Reward along with you——

[*Offers to go, the Queen comes up to him, and gives him a Box on the Ear.*

Eſſ.

Eſſ. Ha! Furies, Death and Hell! a Blow!
Has *Eſſex* had a Blow!——Hold, ſtop my Arm [*Lays Hand on his Sword.*
Some God——Who is't has given it me? the Queen!
South. What do you mean, my Lord?
Queen. Unhand the Villain——
Durſt the vile Slave attempt to murder me?
Eſſ. No, you're my Queen, that charms me; but by all
The Subtlety, and Woman in your Sex
I ſwear, that had you been a Man you durſt not:
Nay, your bold Father *Harry* durſt not this
Have done——Why ſay I him? not all the *Harrys*,
Nor *Alexander*'s ſelf, were he alive,
Shou'd boaſt of ſuch a Deed on *Eſſex* done
Without Revenge.
Queen. Rail on, deſpair, and curſe thy fooliſh Breath,
I'll leave thee like thy Hopes at th' Hour of Death,
Like the firſt Slayer, wandring with a Mark,
Shunning the Light, and wiſhing for the Dark,
In Torments worſe than Hell, when thou ſhalt ſee
Thou haſt by this curs'd Chance loſt Heav'n and me.
[*Exeunt* Queen, *&c. manent* Eſſex *and* Southampton.
South. What have you done, my Lord? Your haughty Carriage
Has ruin'd both your ſelf and all your Friends——
Follow the Queen, and humbly on your Knees
Implore her Mercy, and confeſs your Fault.
Eſſ. Ha! and tell her that I'll take a Blow!
Thou wou'dſt not wiſh thy Friend were ſuch a Slave——
By Heav'n my Cheeks have ſet on fire my Soul,
And the Diſgrace ſticks cloſer to my Heart,
Than did the Son of old *Antipater*'s,
Which coſt the Life of his proud Maſter——Stand off,
Beware you lay not Hands upon my Ruin;
I have a Load would ſink ſink a Legion that
Shou'd offer but to ſave me.
South. My Lord, let us retire,
And ſhun this barbarous Place.
Eſſ. Ay, there thou ſay'ſt it——
Abhor all Courts, if thou art brave and wiſe,
For then thou never ſhalt be ſure to riſe;

Think not by doing well a Fame to get,
But be a Villain, and thou ſhalt be great,
Here Virtue ſtands by't ſelf, or not at all;
Fools have Foundations, only brave Men fall;
But if ill Fate, and thy own Merits bring
Thee once to be a Favourite to a King,
It is a Curſe that follows Loyalty,
Curſt in thy Merits, more in thy Degree;
In all the Sport of Chance its chiefeſt Aim,
Mankind's the *Hunt*, a Favourite's the *Game*.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT. IV. SCENE I.

Counteſs of Nottingham, Raleigh.

C. Not. SIR, did you ever ſee ſo ſtrange a Scene
As *Eſſex'* Boldneſs? Nay, and which is more
To be admir'd, the Queen's prodigious Patience!

Ral. So ſtrange, that nought but ſuch a Miracle
Had ſaved him from Death upon the Place.

C. Not. She's of a Nature wondrous in her Sex,
Not haſty to admire the Beauties, Wiſdom,
Valour and Parts in others, tho extreme;
Becauſe there's ſo much Excellence in her ſelf,
And thinks that all Mankind ſhould be ſo too:
But when once entertain'd, none cheriſhes,
Exalts and favours Virtue more than ſhe;
Slow to be mov'd, and in her Rage diſcreet——
But then the Earl's like an ungovern'd Steed,
That has yet all the Shapes and other Beauties
That are commendable, or ſought in one:
His Soul with ſullen Beams ſhines in it ſelf,
More jealous of Mens Eyes than is the Sun,
That will not ſuffer to be look'd into;
And there's a Mine of Sulphur in his Breaſt,
Which when 'tis touch'd or heated, ſtraight takes fire,
And tears and blows up all its Virtues with it.

Ral. Ambitious Minds feed daily upon Paſſion,
And ne'r can be at reſt within themſelves,

Becauſe

Because they never meet with Slaves enough,
To treat upon, Mechanicks to adore 'em,
And Lords and Statesmen to have Cringes from;
Like some of those strange Seas that I have been on,
Whose Tides are always violent and rough,
Where Winds are seldom blowing to molest 'em.
Sh' had done a nobler Justice, if, instead of
That Schoolboy's Punishment, a Blow,
She'ad snatch'd a Halberd from her neareſt Guard,
And thrust it to his Heart; for less than that
Did the bold *Macedonian* Monarch kill
Clytus his Friend, and braver Soldier far.

C. *Not.* But worse had been the Event of such a Deed:
For if the afflicted King was hardly brought
From *Clytus'* Body, she'd have dy'd o'er his.
But how proceed the bold rebellious Lords
In *Essex'* House?

Ral. Still they increase in Number.
The Queen has sent four of her chiefest Lords,
And since I hear the Guards are gone. 'Tis said,
For his Excuse, that *Blunt*, that Fiend of Hell,
And Brand of all his Master's wicked Counsels,
Has spread abroad this most abhor'd of Lyes,
That I and the Lord *Gray* should join to murder him.

C. *Not.* Already then he's hunted to the Toil,
Where let him roar, and lash himself with Fury,
But never, never shall get out with struggling.
O it o'erjoy'd th' Affront within my Soul,
To see the Man by all the World ador'd,
That like a Comet shin'd above, and rul'd below,
To see him on a sudden from our Eyes
Drop like a Star, and vanish in the Ground;
To see him how he bit the cursed Torture
That durst no farther venture than his Lips,
When he pass'd by the Guards, to hear no Noise.
No room for mighty *Essex* was proclaim'd;
No Caps, no Knees, nor Welcomes to salute him:
Then how he chaf'd, and started like a Deer
With the fierce Dart fast sticking in his Side,
And finds his speedy Death where'er he runs!

Ral. Behold the Queen and the whole Court appear.

Enter the Queen, Burleigh, *Countess of* Nottingham, *Lords, Attendants and Guards.*

Queen. Are the Rebellious Earls then apprehended?
Burl. They are, Thanks to the Almighty Powers,
And the eternal Fortune of your Majesty.
Queen. And how did you proceed with my Commands
And how did the Rebels act?
Burl. Most audaciously.
The four Lords, chiefest of your private Council,
Sent thither by your Majesty's Commission,
Came to the Rebel's House, but found the Gates
Guarded and shut against them; yet at last
Telling they brought a Message from the Queen,
They were admitted, all besides, but him
That bore the Seal before the Chancellor,
Deny'd: Entring, they saw the outward Court
Fill'd with a number of promiscuous Persons,
The chief of which bold Traytors in the midst
Stood the two Earls of *Essex* and *Southampton*:
Of whom your faithful Messengers with loud
And loyal Voices did demand the Cause
Of their unjust Assembly, telling them
All real Grievances should be redress'd;
But strait their Words were choak'd with louder Cries,
And by the Earl's Command with Insolence
The People drove 'em to a strong Apartment
Belonging to the House, setting a Guard
Of Muskets at the Door, and threatning them
That they should there be kept close Prisoners
Till the next Morning that the Earl return'd
From visiting his Friends the Citizens.
Queen. O horrid Insolence! attempt my Council!
My neerest Friends! Well, *Essex*, well,
I thank thee for the Cure of my Disease; } *Aside.*
Thou goest the readiest way to give me ease.
To the City say'st! What did he in the City?
Burl. There, as I learnt from many that confess'd,
He was inform'd the Citizens would rise;
Which to promote, he went disguis'd like one
Whom evil Fortune had bereav'd of Sense,

And almoſt ſeem'd as pitiful a Wretch
As *Harpagus*, that fled all o'er diſmember'd
To fond *Aſtyages*, to gain the Truſt
Of all his *Median* Army to betray it.
His Head was bare, the Heat and Duſt had made
His manly Face compaſſionate to behold, which he
So well did uſe, that ſometimes with a Voice
That uſher'd Tears both from himſelf and them,
And ſometimes with a popular Rage, he ran
With Fury thro' the Streets. To thoſe that ſtood
Far off he bended, and made taking Signs;
To thoſe about him rais'd his Voice aloud,
And humbly did beſeech 'em for a Guard;
Told 'em he was attempted to be murder'd
By ſome the Chief of the Court, then counted all his Wounds,
Unſtrip'd his Breaſt, and ſhew'd his naked Scars,
Telling them what great Wonders he had done,
And wou'd do more to ſerve them and their Children,
Begging ſtill louder to the ſtinking Rabble,
And ſweated too ſo many eager Drops, as if
He had been pleading for *Rome*'s Conſulſhip.

Queen. How came he taken?

Burl. After he had us'd
Such ſubtile Means to gain your Subjects Hearts,
(Your Citizens that ever were moſt faithful,
And too well grounded in their Loyalties
To be ſeduc'd from ſuch a Queen) and finding
That none began to arm in his behalf,
Fear and Confuſion of his horrid Guilt
Poſſeſt him; and deſpairing of Succeſs,
Attempted ſtraight to walk thro' *Ludgate* home:
But being reſiſted by ſome Companies
Of the Train'd-bands that ſtood there in defence,
He ſoon retreated to the neareſt Stairs,
And ſo came back by Water at the time
When your moſt valiant Soldiers with their Leader
Enter'd his Houſe, and took *Southampton* and the reſt.
The affrighted Earl, defenceleſs both in Mind
And Body, without the Power to help himſelf;
And being full of Horror in his Thoughts,
Was forc'd to run for Shelter in the Room

Of a ſmall Summer-houſe upon the *Thames*,
Which when the Soldiers came to ſearch, and found him;
Who then had Eyes and did not melt for pity?
To ſee the high, the gallant *Eſſex* there
Trembling and panting like the frighted Quarry,
Whom the fierce Hawk had in his eager Eye?

Queen. Ha! by my Stars, I think the mournful Tale
Has almoſt made thee weep—— Can *Eſſex'* Miſeries
Then force Compaſſion from thy ſtinty Breaſt?
He weeps, the Crocodile weeps o'er his Prey!
How wretched and how low then art thou fal'n,
That ev'n thy barbarous Hunters can neglect
Their Rage, and turn their cruel Sport to Pity! *Aſide.*
What then muſt be my Lot? How many Sighs,
How many Griefs, Repentances and Horrors
Muſt I eternally endure for this?
Where is the Earl?

Burl. Under ſufficient Guard,
In order to his ſending to the Tower.

Queen. Ha, in the Tower! How durſt thou ſend him there
Without my Order?

Burl. The Earls are yet without
In the Lieutenant's Cuſtody, who waits
But to receive your Majeſty's Command
To carry 'em thither.

Queen. What ſhall I do now?
Wake me thou watchful Genius of thy Queen,
Rouſe me, and arm againſt my Foe;
Pity's my Enemy, and Love's my Foe,
And both have equally conſpir'd with *Eſſex*.
Ha! ſhall I then refuſe to puniſh him;
Condemn the Slave that diſobey'd my Orders, *Aſide.*
That brav'd me to my Face and did attempt
To murder me, then went about to gain
My Subjects Hearts, and ſeize my Crown?
Now by my thouſand Wrongs he dies, dies quickly,
And I cou'd ſtab his Heart, if I but thought
The Traytor in it to corrupt it——Away,
And ſend him to the Tower with ſpeed—Yet hold.

C. *Not.* The Queen's diſtracted how to ſave the Earl—— *Aſide.*
Her Study puts my Hatred on the Rack.

Queen.

Queen. Who is it thou wou'dst kill with so much haste?
Is it not *Essex?* him thou didst create,
And crown'd his Morning with full Rays of Honours;
Whilst he return'd 'em with whole Springs of Laurels,
Fought for thy Fame a hundred times in Blood,
And ventur'd twice as many Lives for thee;
And shall I then for one rash act of his
Of which I was the cruel Cause, condemn him?
C. *Not.* Her Rage ebbs out, and Pity flows apace.
Queen. Do what you will, my Stars; do as you please, } *Aside.*
Just Heav'n, and censure *England*'s Queen for it;
Yet *Essex* I must see, and then whoe'er thou art,
When I am dead, shall call this tender Fault,
This only Action of my Life in question,
Thou canst at worse but say, that it was Love,
Love that does never cease to be obey'd,
Love that has all my Power and Strength betray'd,
Love that sways wholly like the Cause of things;
Kings may rule Subjects, but Love reigns o'er Kings,
Sets Bounds to Heav'ns high Wrath when 'tis severe,
And is the greatest Bliss and Virtue there——
Carry *Southampton* to the Tower straight,
But *Essex* I will see before he goes——
Now help me Art, check every Pulse within me, } *Aside.*
And let me feign a Courage, tho I've none——

Enter Essex *with Guards.*

Behold he comes with such a Pomp of Misery; } *Aside.*
Greatness in all he shews, and nothing makes
Him less, but turns to be Majestick in him.
All that are present, for a while, withdraw,
And leave the Prisoner here with me unguarded.
[*Exeunt, manent* Queen *and* Essex.
Ess. Thus tho I am condemn'd and hated by you,

A Traytor by your Royal Will proclaim'd; [*Essex kneels.*
Thus do I bless my Queen, and all those Powers
That have inspir'd her with such tender Mercy,
As once to hear her dying *Essex* speak,
And now receive his Sentence from your Lips,
Which let it be my Life or Death, they're both
Alike to me, from you, my Royal Mistress:
And thus I will receive my Doom, and wish
My Knees might ever, till my dying Minute,
Cleave to the Earth, as now they do, in token of
The choicest, humblest begging of the Blessing.

Queen. Pray rise, my Lord, you see that I dare venture
To leave my self without a Guard between us.

Essex. Fairest that e'er was *England's* Queen, you need not——
The time has been that *Essex* has been thought
A Guard, and being near you, has been more
Than Crowds of Mercenary Slaves;
And is he not so now? O think me rather,
Think me a Traytor, if I can be so
Without a Thought against your precious Life;
But wrong me not with that: For by your self,
By your bright self that rules o'er all my Wishes,
I swear I wou'd not touch that Life, to be
As great as you, the greatest Prince on Earth;
Lightning shou'd blast me first,
Ere I wou'd touch the Person of my Queen,
Less gentle than the Breeze.

Queen. O y'are become a wondrous Penitent!
My Lord, the time has been you were not so;
Then you were haughty, and because you urg'd me,
Urg'd me beyond the Suffering of a Saint,
To strike you, which a King wou'd have obey'd;
Then straight your Malice led you to the City,
Tempting my Loyal Subjects to rebel,
Laying a Plot how to surprize the Court,
Then seize my Person with my chiefest Council,
To murder them, and I to beg your Mercy.
This, this the wondrous faithful *Essex* did,
Thou whom I rais'd from the vile Dust of Man,
And plac'd thee as a Jewel in my Crown,
And bought thee dearly for my Favour, at the rate

Of all my Peoples Grievances and Curſes
Yet thou didſt this, ingrateful Monſter, this
And all, for which as ſurely thou ſhalt die,
Die like the fouleſt and the worſt Ingrate;
But Fetters now have humbled you, I ſee.

Eſſex. O hear me ſpeak, moſt injur'd Majeſty!
Brighteſt of Queens, Goddeſs of Mercy too!
O, think not that the Fear of Death or Priſons
Can e'er diſturb a Heart like mine, or make it
More guilty, or more ſenſible of Guilt.
All that y'are pleas'd to ſay, I now confeſs,
Confeſs my Miſery, my Crime, my Shame;
Yet neither Death nor Hell ſhou'd make me own it,
But true Remorſe and Duty to your ſelf,
And Love—— I dare ſtand Candidate with Heav'n,
Who loves you moſt and pureſt.

Queen. How he awakes me,
And all my Faculties begin to liſten,
Steal to my Eyes, and tread ſoft Paces to
My Ears, as loth to be diſcover'd, yet
As loth to loſe the charming Syren's Song.
Help me a little now my cautious Angel.
I muſt confeſs I formerly believ'd ſo,
And I acknowledg'd it by my Rewards. } *Aſide.*

Eſſex. You have, but oh, what has my Raſhneſs done,
And what has not my Guilt condemn'd me to!
Seated I was in Heav'n, where once that Angel,
That haughty Spirit reign'd that tempted me,
But now thrown down, like him, to worſe than Hell.

Queen. Ay, think on that, and like that Fiend roar ſtill
In Torments, when thou may'ſt have been moſt happy—
There I out-did my Strength, and feel my Rage
Recoil upon me like a fooliſh Child,
Who firing of a Gun as much as he can lift,
Is blaſted with the Fury of the Blow. } *Aſide.*

Eſſ. Moſt bleſt of Queens! her Doom, her very Anger's [kind,
And I will ſuffer it as willingly
As your loud Wrongs inſtruct you to inflict.
I know my Death is nigh, my Enemies
Stand like a Guard of Furies ready by you,
To intercept each Sigh, kind Wiſh or Pity,
Ere it can reach to Heav'n in my Defence,

And

And dash it with a Cloud of Accusations.

Queen. Ha! I begin to dread the danger nigh,
Like an unskilful Swimmer that has waded
Beyond his Depth, I am caught, and almost drown'd
In Pity—What! And no one near to help me! *Aside.*

Ess. My Father once too truly skill'd in Fate,
In my first blooming Age to rip'ning Glory,
Bid me beware my Six and Thirtieth Year,
That Year said he will fatal to thee prove,
Something like Death, or worse than Death will seize thee.
Too well I find that cruel Time's at hand,
For what can e'er more fatal to me prove
Than my lost Fame, and losing of my Queen?

Queen. 'Tis so, 'tis true, nor is it in my Power
To help him—Ha! Why is it not? What hinders?
Who dares, or thinks to contradict my Will?
Is it my Subjects or my Virtue stays me?
No, Virtue's patient, and abhors Revenge, *Aside.*
Nay, sometimes weeps at Justice—'Tis not Love.
Ah call it any thing but that; 'tis Mercy,
Mercy that pities Foes when in Distress,
Mercy the Heav'n's Delight———
My Lord, I fear your hot-spur Violence
Has brought you to the very brink of Fate,
And 'tis not in my Power, if I'd the Will,
To save you from the Sentence of the Law;
The Lords that are to be your equal Judges,
The House has chose already, and to morrow,
So soon your Tryal is to be. The People
Cry loud for Justice; therefore I'll no more
Repeat my Wrongs, but think you are the Man
That once was Loyal.

Ess. Once!———

Queen. Hold!—For that Reason I will not upbraid you;
To triumph o'er a miserable Man
Is base in any, in a Queen far worse———
Speak now, my Lord, and think what's in my Power
That may not wrong your Queen, and I will grant you—
So—I am sure in this I have not err'd. [*Aside.*

Ess. Blest be my Queen, in Mercy rich as Heaven———
Now, now my Chains are light—Come, welcome Death,
Come all your Spirits of Immortality,

And

And waft my Soul unto his bright Abode,
That gives my Queen this Goodneſs: Let me then
Moſt humbly and devoutly ask two things;
The firſt is, if I am condemn'd,
That Execution may be done within
The Tower-Walls, and ſo I may not ſuffer
Upon a publick Scaffold to the World.

Queen. I grant it—O, and wiſh I cou'd do more. [*Aſide.*

Eſſ. Eternal Bleſſings crown your Royal Head:
The next, the extremeſt Bliſs my Soul can covet,
And carry with it to the other World,
As a firm Paſſport to the Powers incens'd,
Say you have pardon'd me, and have forgot
The Rage, the Guilt, and Folly of your *Eſſex.*

Queen, Ha! What ſhall I do now? } *Aſide.*
Look to thy ſelf, and guard thy Character——
Go cure your Fame, and make your ſelf but what I wiſh you,
Then you ſhall find that I am ſtill your Queen——
But that you may not ſee I'm covetous
Of my Forgiveneſs, take it from my Heart;
I freely pardon now whate'er y'ave done
Amiſs to me, and hope you will be quitted;
Nay, I not only hope it, but ſhall pray for it,
My Prayers to Heav'n ſhall be that you may clear
Your ſelf.

Eſſ. O moſt Renown'd and Godlike Mercy!
O let me go; your Goodneſs is too bright
For ſinful Eyes like mine, or like the Fiend
Of Hell, when daſht from the Ætherial Light,
I ſhall ſhoot downwards with my weight of Curſes,
Cleave and be chain'd for ever to the Centre——

Queen. He is going, Ay, but whither?
To his Tryal,
To be condemn'd, perhaps and then to die.
If ſo, what Mercy haſt thou ſhew'd in that?
Pity and Pardon! Poor amends his Life!
If thoſe be well, a Crocodile is blameleſs
That weeps for pity, yet devours his Prey:
And dare not I do more for *Eſſex*, I
That am a Woman? and in Womankind
Pity's their Nature, therefore I'm reſolv'd
It ſhall be in's own Power to ſave his Life. } *Aſide.*

If

If I ſhall ſin in this, witneſs juſt Heaven
'Tis Mercy like your ſelf that draws me to't, } *Aſide.*
And you'll forgive me, tho the World may not—}
My Lord, perhaps we ne'er may meet again,
And you in Perſon may not have the Power
T' implore what I do freely grant you; therefore
That you may ſee you have not barely forc'd
An empty Pity from me, here's a Pledge
I give it from my Finger, with this Promiſe,
That whenſoever you return this Ring, [*Gives him a Ring.*
To grant in lieu of it whate'er you ask.

Eſſ. Thus I receive it with far greater Joy [*Receives it on*
Than the poor Remnant of Mankind that ſaw (*his Knees.*
The Rain-bow Token in the Heav'ns, when ſtraight
The Floods abated, and the Hills appear'd,
And a new ſmiling World the Waves brought forth.

Queen. No more, be gone, fly with thy ſafety hence,
Leſt horrid, dread Repentance ſeize my Soul,
And I recall this ſtrange miſdeed—Here take
[*Enter the reſt with the Guards.*
Your Priſoner, there he is to be condemn'd
Or quitted by the Law—away with him. [*Ex. Guards with*
Now, *Nottingham*, thy Queen is now at reſt, (*the Earl.*
And *Eſſex'* Fate is now my leaſt of Troubles.

Enter Counteſs of Eſſex *running and weeping, then kneels before the* Queen, *and holds by her Robe.*

C. *Eſſ.* Where is my Queen? Where is my Royal
I throw my ſelf for Mercy here. [Miſtreſs?—

Queen. What meaneſt thou?

C. *Eſſ.* Here I will kneel, here with my humble Body
Faſt rooted to the Earth, as I'm to Sorrow,
No Moiſture but my Tears to nouriſh me,
Nor Air but Sighs, till I ſhall grow at laſt
Like a poor ſhrivell'd Trunk blaſted with Age
And Grief, and never think to riſe again
Till I've obtain'd the Mercy I implore.

Queen. Thou doſt amaze me.

C. *Eſſ.* Here let me grow the abjeſt'ſt thing on Earth,
A deſpis'd Plant beneath the mighty Cedar,
Yet if you will not pity me, I ſwear
Theſe Arms ſhall never ceaſe, but graſping ſtill

Your Royal Robe, shall hold you thus for ever.

Queen. Prithee be quick, and tell me what wou'dst have.

C. *Ess.* I dare not, yet I must—my silence will
Be Death, my Punishment can be no more.
Prepare to hear, but learn to pity first,
For 'tis a Story that will start your Patience——
O save the Earl of *Essex*, save his Life,
My Lord whom you've condemn'd to Prisons straight,
And save my Life, who am no longer *Rutland*,
But *Essex'* faithful Wife——he is my Husband.

Queen. Thy Husband!

C. *Ess.* Yes, too true it is I fear,
By th' awful darting Fury in your Eyes,
The threatning Prologue of our utter Ruins.
Marry'd we were in secret, ere my Lord
Was sent by you unto his fatal Government
In *Ireland*.

Queen. Then thou art wedded to thy Grave——
Dost think by this, in multiplying Treasons,
And boldly braving me with them before,
My Face, to save thy wicked Husband's Life?
What will my resistless Fate do with me now! [*Aside.*
Why dost thou hold me so? take off thy Hands.

C. *Ess.* Alas, I ask not mine; if that will please you,
I'll glut you with my Torments; act whate'er
Your Fury can invent: but 'tis for him,
My Lord, my Love, the Soul of my Desires.
My Love's not like the common Race of Womens,
It is a *Phœnix*, there is not one such more:
How gladly would I burn like that rare Bird,
So that the Ashes of my Heart cou'd purchase
Poor *Essex'* Life, and Favour of my Princess!

Queen. Wou'd I were loose 'mong Wilds, or any where,
In any Hell but this——Why say I Hell? } *Aside.*
Can there be melting Lead, or Sulphur yet
To add more Pain to what my Breast endures?
Why dost thou hang on me, and tempt me still?

C. *Ess.* O throw me not away—wou'd you but please
To feel my throbbing Breast, you might perceive,
At ev'ry Name, and every thought of *Essex*,
How my Blood starts, and Pulses beat for fear,

And shake and tear my Body like an Earthquake;
And ah! which cannot choose but stir your Heart
The more to pity me, the unhappy frighted Infant,
The tender Offspring of our guilty Joys,
Pleads for its Father in the Womb,
As now its wretched Mother does.

Queen. Quickly
Unloose her Hands, take her from my sight.

C. *Ess.* O you will not—you'll hear me first, and grant (me,
Grant me poor *Essex'* Life—shall *Essex* live?
Say, but you'll pardon him before I go.

Queen. Help me—will no one ease me of this Burden?

C. *Ess.* Oh I'm too weak for these inhuman Creatures,

[*The Women take off her hold.*

My Strength's decay'd, my Joints and Fingers numm'd,
And can no longer hold, but fall I must.
Thus like a miserable Wretch that thinks
H'as 'scap'd from drowning, holding on a Rock
With Fear and Pain, and his own Weight oppress,
And dasht by ev'ry Wave that shrinks his hold,

[*She falls down with faintness.*

At length lets go and drops into the Sea,
And cries for help, but all in vain like me.

Queen. Be gone, and be deliver'd of thy Shame:
Let the vile Insect live, and grow to be
A Monster baser, hotter, worser far,
Than the ingrateful Parents that begot it.

C. *Ess.* Ah cruel, most remorseless Princess! hold,
What has it done to draw such Curses from you?

Queen. Go let her be close Prisoner in her Chamber.

C. *Ess.* Since I must go, and from my *Essex* part,
Despair and Death at once come seize my Heart:
Shut me from Light, from Day ne'er to be seen
By human kind, nor my more cruel Queen;
Yet bless her Heav'n, and hear my loyal Prayer,
May you ne'er love like me, nor ne'er despair:
Ne'er see the Man at his departing Breath,
Whom you so love, and fain would save from Death;
Left Heav'n be deaf as you are to my Cry,
And you run mad, and be as curst as I.

[*Exit C.* Essex, *carried away by Women.*

Queen.

Queen. She's gone, but at her parting shot a Truth
Into my Breast, has pierc'd my very Soul——
Why was I Queen? And why was I not *Rutland*?
Then had my Princess, as my self did now,
Giv'n *Essex* such a Ring, and the Reward
Had then been mine, as now the Torment is——
O wretched State of Monarchs! theirs is still
The Business of the World, and all the Pains,
Whilst happy Subjects sleep beneath their Gains;
The meanest Hind rules in his humble House,
And nothing but the Day sees what he does;
But Princes, like the Queen of Night so high,
Their Spots are seen by e'ery vulgar Eye:
And as the Sun, the Planets glorious King,
Gives Life and Growth to e'ery mortal thing,
And by his Motion all the World is blest,
Whilst he himself can never be at rest;
So if there are such Blessings in a Throne,
Kings rain 'em down, while they themselves have none.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Sir Walter Raleigh *with the Queen's Guards. The Lieutenant of the Tower.*

Ral. MR. Lieutenant, here expires my Charge:
I received Orders from her Majesty,
And the Lord Steward, to return the Prisoners
Safe in your Custody, and with you I leave 'em,
With Charge to have them in a readiness;
For Execution will be very speedy.

Lieut. I shall, Sir.

Enter Countess of Nottingham.

Ra. Ha! The Lady *Nottingham!*
What makes her here?

Not. Where is my Lord of *Essex?*
I am commanded straight to speak with him,

And bring a Message from her Majesty.

Ral. Madam,
What News can this strange Visit bring?
How fares the Queen? Are her Resolves yet stedfast?

Not. No, when she heard that *Essex* was condemn'd,
She started and look'd pale; then blushing red,
And said that Execution should be straight,
Then stopt, and said she'd hear first from the Earl;
So she retired and past an Hour in Thought,
None daring t'interrupt her, till in haste
She sent for me, commanding me to go
And tell my Lord from her, she cou'd resist
No longer her Subjects loud demands for Justice,
And therefore wish'd, if he had any Reasons
That were of weight to stay his Execution,
That he would send them straight by me;
Then blush'd again, and sigh'd, and prest my Hand,
And pray'd me to be secret, and deliver
What *Essex* should return in answer to her.

Ral. I know not what she means, but doubt th' Event—
You can best tell the Cause of her Disturbance.
I will to *Burleigh*, and then both of us
Will make Attempts to recollect the Queen.

[*Ex.* Raleigh *and Guards.*

Not. Pray bring me to my Lord.

Lieut. Madam, I will acquaint him that y'are here. [*Ex.*

Not. Now Dragons Blood distil thro' all my Veins, (Lieut.
And Gall instead of Milk swell up my Breasts,
That nothing of the Woman may appear,
But horrid Cruelty and fierce Revenge——.

Enter Essex.

He comes with such a Gallantry and Port,
As if his Miseries were Harbingers,
And Death the State to set his Person out——.
Wrongs less than mine, tho in a Tyger's Breast,
Might now be reconcil'd to such an Object;
But slighted Love my Sex can ne'er forget.

Ess. Madam, this is a Miracle of Favour,
A double Goodness in my Royal Mistress,
T' imploy the fair, the injur'd *Nottingham*;
And 'tis no less in you to condescend

To

To see a Wretch like me, that has deserv'd
No Favour at your hands.
Not. No more, my Lord; the Queen,
The gracious Queen commends her Pity to you,
Pity by me that owe a great deal more
You know, and wish that I were once your Queen
To give you what my Heart had so long in store.
Ess. Then has my Death more Charms than Life can promise
Since my Queen pities me, and you forgive me.
Not. Hold, my good Lord, that is not all, she sends
To know if you can any thing propose
To mitigate your Doom, and stay your Death,
Which else can be no longer than this Day.
Next, if y'are satisfy'd with ev'ry Passage
In your late Tryal, if 'twere fair and legal;
And if y'ave those Exceptions that are real,
She'll answer them.
Ess. Still is my Death more welcome,
And Life will be a Burden to my Soul,
Since I can ne'er requite such Royal Goodness.
Tell her then, fair and charitable Messenger,
That *Essex* does acknowledge every Crime,
His Guilt unworthy of such wondrous Mercy;
Thanks her bright Justice, and the Lords his Judges,
For all was gracious and divine like her;
And I have now no Injustice to accuse,
Nor Enemy to blame that was the Cause,
Nor Innocence to save me but the Queen.
Not. Ha, is this true! how he undoes my Hopes! [*Aside.*
And is that all? Have you not one Request
To ask, that you can think the Queen will grant you?
Ess. I have, and humbly 'tis that she would please
To spare my Life; not that I fear to die:
But in Submission to her Heav'nly Justice,
I own my Life a Forfeit to her Power,
And therefore ought to beg it of her Mercy.
Not. If this be real, my Revenge is lost. [*Aside.*
Is there nought else that you rely upon,
Only submitting to the Queen's mere Mercy,
And barely asking her so great a Grace?
Have you no other Hopes?
Ess. Some Hopes I have.

Not. What are they? pray, my Lord, declare 'em boldly,
For to that only purpose I am sent.
Ess. Then I am happy, happiest of Mankind,
Blest in the rarest Mercy of my Queen,
And such a Friend as you, blest in you both,
The Extasy will let me hold no longer——
Behold this Ring, the Passport of my Life;
At last y'ave pull'd the Secret from my Heart.
This precious Token——
Amidst my former Triumphs in her Favour,
She took from off her Finger, and bestow'd
On me—mark—with the Promise of a Queen,
Of her bright self less failing than an Oracle,
That in what Exigence of State soe'er
My Life was in, that time when I gave back,
Or shou'd return this Ring again to her,
She'd then deny me nothing, I cou'd ask.
Not. O give it me, my Lord, and quickly let
Me bear it to the Queen, and ask your Life.
Ess. Hold, generous Madam, I receiv'd it on
[*Kneels, and gives* Nottingham *the Ring.*
My Knees, and on my Knees I will restore it.
Here take it, but consider what you take;
Tis the Life, Blood, and very Soul of *Essex.*
I've heard that by a skilful Artist's Hand,
The Bowels of a Wretch were taken out,
And yet he liv'd; you are that gallant Artist,
O touch it as you would the Seals of Life,
And give it to my Royal Mistress' Hand,
As you wou'd pour my Blood back in its empty Channels,
That gape and thirst like Fishes on the Ouse
When Streams run dry, and their own Element
Forsakes 'em; if this shou'd in the least miscarry,
My Life's the Purchase that the Queen will have for't.
Not. Doubt you my Care, my Lord? I hope you do not.
Ess. I will no more suspect my Fate nor you;
Such Beauty, and such Merits must prevail.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. The Earl of *Southampton* having leave,
Desires to speak with you, my Lord.

Not.

Not. Repoſe
Your Mind, and take no thought but to be happy;
I'll ſend you tidings of a laſting Life.
Eſſ. A longer and much happier Life attend
Both my good Queen and you. [*Exit* Eſſex.
Not. Farewel, my Lord——
Yes a much longer Life than thine, I hope,
And if thou chance to dream of ſuch ſtrange things,
Let it be there where lying Poets feign
Elyſium is, where Myrtles lovely ſpread,
Trees of delicious Fruit invite the Taſte,
And ſweet *Arabian* Plants delight the Smell;
Where pleaſant Gardens dreſt with curious Care
By Lovers Ghoſts, ſhall recreate thy Fancy;
And there perhaps thou ſoon ſhall meet again
With amorous *Rutland*, for ſhe cannot chooſe
But be Romantick now, and follow thee.——

Enter a Gentlewoman.

Wom. Madam, the Queen
Not. Ha! that's unlucky——She come to the Tower!
Yet 'tis no matter; ſee him I am ſure
She will not, or at worſt will be perſwaded.

Enter the Queen.

Queen. How now, dear *Nottingham*, haſt ſeen the Earl?
I left *Whitehall*, becauſe I cou'd not reſt
For Crowds that hallow'd for their Executions,
And others that petition'd for the Traitors.
Quick, tell me, haſt thou done as I commanded?
Not. Yes, Madam, I have ſeen and ſpoke with him.
Queen. And what has he ſaid to thee for himſelf?
Not. At my firſt Converſe with him I did find him
Not totally deſpairing, nor complaining;
But yet a haughty Melancholy
Appear'd in all his Looks, that ſhew'd him rather
Like one that had more Care
Of future Life than this.
Queen. Well, but what ſaid he,
When thou awaked'ſt him with Hopes of Pity?
Not. To my firſt Queſtion put by your Command,
Which was to know if he were ſatisfy'd

In

In the Proceedings of his lawful Tryal,
He answer'd with a careless Tone and Gesture,
That it was true, and he must needs confess
His Tryal look'd most fair to all the World;
But yet he too well knew,
The Law that made his Actions Treason,
Consulted but with Foes and Circumstances,
And never took from Heav'n or *Essex* Thought
A Precedent or Cause that might condemn him:
For if they had the least been read in either,
They wou'd have quickly found his Innocence.

Queen. Ha!

Not. That was but the Prologue, mark what follows.

Queen. What, durst he be so bold to brand my Justice?

Not. I pray'd that he wou'd urge that Scene no more,
But since he was condemn'd and stood in need
Of Mercy, to implore it of your Majesty,
And beg his Life which you would not deny:
For to that end I said that you were pleas'd
To send me to him, and then told him all,
Nay more than you commanded me to say.

Queen. What said he then? that alter'd him I hope.

Not. No not at all, but as I have seen a Lyon
That has been play'd withal with gentle Strokes,
Has at the last been jested into Madness;
Soon on a sudden started into Passion
The furious Earl, his Eyes grew fiery red,
His Words precipitate, and Speech disorder'd;
Let the Queen have my Blood, said he, 'tis that
She longs for, pour it out to my Foes to drink;
As Hunters when the Quarry is run down,
Throw to the Hounds his Entrails for Reward.
I have enough to spare, but by the Heavens
I swear, were all my Veins like Rivers full,
And if my Body held a Sea of Blood,
I'd lose it all to the last innocent drop,
Before I'd like a Villain beg my Life.

Queen. Hold, *Nottingham* and say th'art not in earnest—
Can this be true, so impudent a Traitor!

Not. That's but the Gloss, the Colour of his Treason,
But after he did paint himself to th' Life.
Wou'd the Queen, said he, have me own a Treason,

Impose

Impose upon my self a Crime, the Law
Has found me guilty of by her Command;
And so by asking of my forfeit Life,
Clear and proclaim her Justice to the World,
And stain my self for ever? no, I'll die first.

Queen. Enough, I'll hear no more, you wrong him, 'tis
Impossible he shou'd be such a Devil.

Not. Madam, I've done.

Queen. I prithee pardon me——
But could he say all this?

Not. He did, and more;
But 'tis no matter, 'twill not be believ'd
If I should tell the half of what he utter'd,
How insolent and how profane he us'd you.

Queen. You need not, I had rather
Believe it all than put you to the Trouble
To tell it o'er again, and me to hear it.
Then I am lost, betray'd by this false Man:
My Courage, Power, my Pity all betray'd,
And like that Giant, Patriarch of the *Jews*,
Bereft at once both of his Sight and Strength
By treacherous Foes, I wander in the dark,
By *Essex* weakned, and by *Essex* blinded:
But then as he pray'd that his Strength might grow, } *Aside.*
At once to be reveng'd on them and die,
So grant me Heav'n but so much Resolution
To grope my Way, that where I lay but hold
On whatsoe'er this huge *Colossus* stands,
I'll pull the Scaffold down, tho o'er my Head,
And lose my Life to be reveng'd on his——
Well, *Nottingham*, I have but one Word more,
Talk'd not this wicked Creature of no Reason,
No Obligation that I had to save
His Life?

Not. No but far worse than I have told you.

Queen. Sure thou art most unhappy in ill News!
No Promise, nor Token did he speak of?

Not. Not the least word, and if there are such Things,
I do suppose he keeps 'em to himself,
For Reasons that I know not.

Queen. 'Tis most false,
He needs must tell thee all, and thou betray'st him.

Not. Your Majesty does me wrong———

Queen. Hear me———

Oh I can hold no longer——Say, sent he
No Ring, no Token, nor no Message by thee?

Not. Not any on the Forfeit of my Life.

Queen. Thou lyest—Can Earth produce so vile a Creature?———

Hence from my Sight, and see my Face no more——
Yet tarry *Nottingham*———Come back again.
This may be true, and I am still the Wretch [*Aside.*
To blame and to be pity'd——Prithee pardon me;
Forget my Rage, thy Queen is sorry for't.

Not. I wou'd your Majesty instead of me,
Had sent a Person that you cou'd confide in,
Or else that you wou'd see the Earl your self.

Queen. Prithee no more; go to him!
No, but I'll send a Message for his Head;
His Head's the Token that my Wrongs require,
And his base Blood the Stream to quench my Fury——
Prithee invent: for thou art wondrous witty
At such Inventions; teach my feeble Malice
How to torment him with a thousand Deaths,
Or what is worse than Death——Speak, my *Medea*,
And thou wilt then oblige thy Queen for ever.

Not. First sign an Order for his Execution.

Queen. Say, it is done, but how to torture him!

Not. Then as the Lords are carrying to the Block,
Condoling both their sad Misfortunes,
Which to departing Souls is some Delight,
Order a Pardon for *Southampton's* Life,
It will be worse than Hell to *Essex'* Soul
Where 'tis a going, to see his Friend snatcht from him,
And make him curse his so much Pride and Folly,
That lost his own Life in exchange for his.

Queen. That was well thought on!

Not. This is but the least,
The next will be a fatal Stroke, a Blow indeed;
A thousand Heads to lose is not so dreadful.
Let *Rutland* see him at the very Moment
Of her expiring Husband; she will hang
Worse than his Guilt upon him, lure his Mind,
And pull it back to Earth again; double

All

All the fierce Pangs of Thought and Death upon him,
And make his loaded Spirits ſink to Hell.

Queen. O th'art the *Machiavel* of all the Sex,
Thou braveſt, moſt heroick for Invention!
Come let's diſpatch——

Enter Burleigh, Raleigh, *Lords, Attendants and Guards.*
My Lords, ſee Execution done on *Eſſex*;
But for *Southampton*, I will pardon him:
His Crimes he may repent of; they were not
So great, but done in Friendſhip to the other.
Act my Commands with ſpeed, that both of us
May ſtraight be out of Torment——My Lord *Burleigh*,
And you Sir *Walter Raleigh*, ſee't perform'd;
I'll not return till you have brought the News.

[*Exeunt* Queen *and* Nottingham.

Ra. I wou'd ſhe were a hundred Leagues from hence
Well, and the Crown upon her Head; I fear
She'll not continue in this Mind a Moment.

Burl. Then't ſhall be done this Moment—Who attends?
Bid the Lieutenant have his Priſoners ready. [*Ex. Officer.*
Now we may hope to ſee fair Days again
In *England*, when this hov'ring Cloud is vaniſh'd,
Which hung ſo long betwixt our Royal Sun
And us, but ſoon will viſit us with Smiles,
And raiſe her drooping Subjects Hearts——

Enter the two Earls, Lieutenant and Guards.
My Lord,
We bring an Order for your Execution,
And hope you are prepar'd; for you muſt die
This very Hour.

South. Indeed the time is ſudden!

Eſſ. Is Death the Event of all my flatter'd Hopes?
Falſe Sex, and Queen more perjur'd than them all!
But die I will without the leaſt complaint,
My Soul ſhall vaniſh ſilent as the Dew
Attracted by the Sun from verdant Fields,
And Leaves of weeping Flowers—Come my dear Friend,
Partner in Fate, give me thy Body in
Theſe faithful Arms, and O now let me tell thee,
And you, My Lords, and Heaven my Witneſs too,

I have no weight, no heavineſs on my Soul,
But that I've loſt my deareſt Friend his Life.

South. And I proteſt by the ſame Powers Divine,
And to the World, 'tis all my Happineſs,
The greateſt Bliſs my Mind yet e'er enjoy'd,
Since we muſt die, my Lord, to die together.

Burl. The *Queen*, my Lord *Southampton*, has been pleas'd
To grant particular Mercy to your Perſon;
And has by us ſent you a Reprieve from Death,
With Pardon of your Treaſons, and commands
You to depart immediately from hence.

South. O my unguarded Soul! Sure never was
A Man with Mercy wounded ſo before!

Eſſ. Then I am looſe to ſteer my wandring Voyage,
Like a glad Veſſel that has long been croſt,
And bound by adverſe Winds, at laſt gets Liberty,
And joyfully makes all the Sail ſhe can,
To reach its wiſh'd for Port —— Angels protect
The Queen; for her my chiefeſt Prayers ſhall be,
That as in time ſh'as ſpar'd my noble Friend,
And owns his Crimes worth Mercy, may ſhe ne'er
Think ſo of me too late when I am dead ——
Again, *Southampton*, let me hold thee faſt,
For 'tis my laſt Embrace.

South. O be leſs kind, my Friend, or move leſs Pity,
Or I ſhall ſink beneath the weight of Sadneſs!
Witneſs the Joy I have in Life to part
With you; witneſs theſe Woman's Throbs and Tears;
I weep that I am doom'd to live without you,
And ſhou'd have ſmil'd to ſhare the Death of *Eſſex*.

Eſſ. O ſpare this Tenderneſs for one that needs it,
For her that I'll commit, 'tis all that I
Can claim of my *Southampton* —— O my Wife!
Methinks that very Name ſhou'd ſtop thy Pity,
And make thee covetous of all as loſt
That is not meant to her —— Be a kind Friend
To her, as we have been to one another;
Name not the dying *Eſſex* to thy Queen,
Leſt it ſhou'd coſt a Tear, nor ne'er offend her.

South. O ſtay, my Lord, let me have one Word more;
One laſt farewel, before the ſtrong Axe
Shall part my Friend, my only Friend from me,

And *Eſſex* from himſelf——I know not what
Are call'd the Pangs of Death, but ſure I am
I feel an Agony that's worſe than Death——
Farewel.

Eſſ. Why that's well ſaid——Farewel to thee——
Then let us part, juſt like two Travellers
Take diſtant Paths, only this Difference is,
Thine is the longeſt, mine the ſhorteſt way——
Now let me go——If there's a Throne in Heaven
For the moſt brave of Men and beſt of Friends,
I will beſpeak it for *Southampton.*

South. And I, while I have Life, will hoard thy Memory.
When I am dead, we then ſhall meet again.

Eſſ. Till then Farewel.

South. Till then Farewel. [*Ex.* South.

Eſſ. Now on, my Lords, and execute your Office——

Enter Counteſs of Eſſex *and Women.*

My Wife! Nay then my Stars will ne'er have done.
Malicious Planets reign, I'll bear it all
To your laſt drop of Venom on my Head——
Why cruel lovely Creature, doſt thou come
To add to Sorrow if't be poſſible?
A Figure more lamenting? Why this Kindneſs,
This killing Kindneſs now at ſuch a time?
To add more Woes to thine and my Misfortunes.

C. *Eſſ.* The Queen, my Lord, has been ſo merciful,
Or cruel, name it as you pleaſe, to let
Me ſee my *Eſſex* ere he dies.

Eſſ. Has ſhe?
Then let's improve this very little time
Our niggard Fate allows us: For w'are owing
To this ſhort Space all the dear Love we had
In ſtore for many happy promis'd Years.

C. *Eſſ.* What hinders then but that we ſhould be both happy?
Whilſt others live long Years, and ſip, and taſte,
Like Niggards of their Loves, we'll take whole Draughts.

Eſſ. Then let's embrace in Extaſies and Joys,
Drink all our Honey up in one ſhort Moment,

That ſhou'd have ſerv'd us for our Winter ſtore,
Be laviſh and profuſe like wanton Heirs
That waſte their whole Eſtates at once,
For the kind Queen takes care, and has ordain'd
That we ſhall never live to want.

Burl. My Lord,
Prepare, the very utmoſt time's at hand,
And we muſt ſtraight perform the Queen's Command
In leading you to Juſtice.

C. *Eſſ.* Hold, good *Lucifer!*
Be kind a little, and defer Damnation,
Thou canſt not think how I will worſhip thee,
No *Indian* ſhall adore thee as I will;
Thou ſhalt have Martyrs, and whole Hecatombs
Of ſlaughter'd Innocents to ſuck their Blood,
Widows Eſtates and Orphans without Number,
Mannors and Parks more than thy Luſt requires,
Till thou ſhalt die, and leave a King's Eſtate
Behind thee.

Eſſ. Prithee ſpare thy precious Heart,
That fluttering ſo with Paſſion in thy Breaſt,
Has almoſt bruis'd its Tenderneſs to Death.

C. *Eſſ.* Why ask I him, and think of Pity there?
From him on whom kind Heaven has ſet a Mark,
A heap of Rubbiſh at the Door to ſhew
No cleanly Virtue can inhabit there——
Malicious Toad, and which is worſe, foul *Cecil*,
I tell thee, *Eſſex* ſoon ſhall reign in Heaven,
While thou ſhalt grovel in the Den of Hell,
Roar like the Damn'd, and tremble to behold.
Go ſhare Dominions with the Powers of Hell;
For *Lucifer* himſelf will ne'er diſpute
Thy great Deſert in Wickedneſs above him,
Nor who's the uglier Fiend, thy ſelf or he.

Ra. My Lord, you think not of the Queen's Commands,
And can you ſtand thus unconcern'd, and hear
Your ſelf ſo much abus'd?

Burl. Be patient, *Raleigh*,
The Pain is all her own, and hurts not *Cecil*,
She will be weary ſooner than my ſelf——
Poor innocent and moſt unhappy Lady,
I pity her.

C. *Eſſ.*

C. *Eſſ.* Why, doſt thou pity me?
Nay then I'm faln into a low Eſtate
Indeed, if Hell compaſſionates my Miſeries,
They muſt be greater than the Damn'd endure——
I prithee pardon me——Ah my lov'd Lord,
My Heart begins to break; let me go with thee,
And ſee the fatal Blow giv'n to my *Eſſex*,
That will be ſure to rid me ſoon of Torments:
And 'twill be kindneſs in thee——do my Lord,
Then we ſhall both be quit of Pain together.

Eſſ. Ah, why was I condemn'd to this, what Man
But *Eſſex* ever felt a weight like this!

C. *Eſſ.* O we muſt never part——Support my Head
My ſinking Head, and lay it to the Pulſe,
The throbbing Pulſe that beats about thy Heart,
'Tis Muſick to my Senſes——O my Love!
I have no Tears left in me that ſhou'd eaſe
A Wretch that longs for Pity——I am paſt
All Pity, and my poor tormented Heart
And Spirits within are quite conſum'd,
Which is the Balm, the Scorpion's Blood that cures
The biting Pain of Sorrow, quite have left me,
And I am now a wretched hopeleſs Creature,
Full of ſubſtantial Miſery, without
One Drop of Remedy.

Eſſ. Th'art pale, thy Breath
Grows chill, and like the Morning Air on Roſes,
Leaves a cold Dew upon thy redder Lips——
She ſtrives and holds me like a drowning Wretch——
O now, my Lords, if Pity ever bleſt you,
If you were never curſt by Tigers, help me——
Now, now, you cruel Heavens! I plainly ſee,
'Tis not your Swords, your Axes, nor Diſeaſes,
Which make the Death of Man ſo fear'd and painful,
But 'tis ſuch horrid Accidents as theſe——
She opens her Eyes, with a waining Look,
Like ſickly Stars give a faint glimmering Light.

C. *Eſſ.* Where is my Love?
O think not to get looſe, for I'm reſolv'd
To ſtick more cloſe to thee than Life; and when
That's going, mine ſhall run the Race with thine,
And both together reach the happy Goal.

Eſſ. Now I am ſhock'd, and torn up, and rooted,
That's humane in me——What, you mercileſs Hell,
What is't that makes poor Man diſtracted, mad,
Profane, to curſe the Day, himſelf, the Heavens
That made him, but leſs Miſeries than mine?
Why, why you Powers do you exact from Man
More than your World and all that live beſide?
The Sea is never calm when Tempeſts blow;
Tall Woods and Cedars murmur at the Wind,
And when your horrid Earthquakes cleave the Ground,
The Center groans, and Nature takes its part,
As if they deſign to break your Laws,
And ſhake your Fetters off: nay, your own Heavens,
When Thunders roar, rebel, the Sun engages,
And all the warring Elements reſiſt:
Heav'n, Seas, and Land are ſuffer'd to contend,
But Man alone is curſt if he complain——
Farewel my everlaſting Love, 'tis vain,
'Tis all in vain againſt reſiſtleſs Fate
That pulls me from thee. [*Gives her a Letter.*
Here, give this Paper to the Queen, which when
She reads perhaps ſhe will be kind to thee.

C. *Eſſ.* Wilt thou not let me go?
I am prepar'd to ſee the deadly Stroke,
And at that time the fatal Axe fall on thee,
It will be ſure to cut the twiſted Cord
Of both our Lives aſunder.

Eſſ. We muſt part——
Thou Miracle of Love, and Virtues all;
Farewel, and may thy *Eſſex'* ſad Misfortunes
Be doubled all in Bleſſings on thy Soul——
Still, ſtill thou graſpſt me like the Pangs of Death——
Ha! now ſhe faints, and like a Wretch
Striving to climb a ſteep and ſlippery Breach,
With many hard Attempts gets up and ſtill
Slides down again, ſo ſhe lets go at laſt
Her eager hold, and ſinks beneath her weight——
Support her all——

Burl. My Lord, ſhe will recover;
Pray leave her with her Women, and make uſe
Of this ſo kind an Opportunity
To part with her.

Eſſ. Cruel hard-hearted *Burleigh!*
Moſt barbarous *Cecil!*
Burl. See my Lord,
She ſoon will come t'her ſelf, and you muſt leave her—
Haſte away.
Lieut. Make way there.
Eſſ. Look to her, faithful Servants, while ſhe lives
She'll be a tender Miſtreſs to you all———
Come, puſh me off then, ſince I muſt ſwim o'er,
Why do I thus ſtand ſhivering on the Shore!
'Tis but a Breath, and I no more ſhall think,
Mix with the Sun, or into Atoms ſhrink:
Lift up thy Eyes no more in ſearch of mine,
Till I am dead, then glad the World with thine———
This Kiſs (O that it would for ever laſt!)
Gives me of Immortality a Taſte——
Farewel,
May all that's paſt when thou recover'ſt ſeem
Like a glad waking from a fearful Dream.
[*Exeunt* Eſſex *to Execution*, Burleigh, Raleigh, *Lieutenant and Guards.*

Manent Counteſs of Eſſex *with Women.*

Wom. See, ſhe revives,
C. *Eſſ.* Where is my *Eſſex*, where?
Wom. Alas! I fear by this time he's no more.
C. *Eſſ.* Why did you wake me then from ſuch bright Objects?
I ſaw my *Eſſex* mount with Angels Wings
(Whilſt I rode on the beauteous Cherubin)
And took me on 'em, bore me o'er the World
Thro' everlaſting Skies, eternal Light.
Wom. Be comforted.
C. *Eſſ.* Sure we are the only Pair
Can boaſt of ſuch a Pomp of Miſery,
And none was e'er ſubſtantially ſo curſt,
Since the firſt Couple that knew Sorrow firſt;
Yet they were happy, and for Paradiſe
Found a new World unskill'd, unfraught with Vice,
No Tyrant to moleſt 'em, nor no Sword,
All that had Life Obedience did afford,

No Pride but Labour there and healthful Pains:
No Thief to rob them of their honeſt Gains:
Ambition now the Plague of every Thought,
Then was not known, or elſe was unbegot.

Enter the Queen, Counteſs of Nottingham, *Lords and Attendants.*

Queen. Behold where the poor *Rutland* lies, almoſt
As dead and low, as *Eſſex* in his Grave
Can be, and I want but a very little
To be more miſerable than them both——
Riſe, riſe, unfortunate and mournful *Rutland*,
I know not what to call thee now, but wiſh
I could not call thee by the Name of *Eſſex*——
Riſe, and behold thy Queen, I ſay,
That bends to take thee in her Arms.

C. *E.* O never think to charm me with ſuch Sounds,
Such Hopes that are too diſtant from my Soul,
For 'tis but preaching Heav'n to one that's damn'd——
O take your Pity back, moſt cruel Queen,
Give it to thoſe that want it for a Cure,
My Griefs are mortal, Remedies are vain,
And thrown away on ſuch a Wretch as I——
Here is a Paper from my Lord to you,
It was his laſt Requeſt that you would read it.

Queen. Giv't me—but Oh how much more welcome had
The Ring been in its ſtead. [*Reads to her ſelf.*

C. *Not.* Ha! I'm betray'd. [*Aſide.*

Queen. Haſte, ſee if Execution yet be done,
If not, prevent it——Fly with Angels Wings——
[*Officers go out.*
O thou far worſe than Serpent——worſe than Woman!
Ah *Rutland!* here's the cruel Cauſe of both our Woes,
Mark this, and help to curſe her for thy Husband.

The Queen reads the Letter.

MADAM,

'I Receive my Death with the Willingneſs and Submiſ-
'ſion of a Subject, and as it is the Will of Heaven
'and of your Majeſty, with this Requeſt, that you would
'be

'be pleas'd to bestow that Royal Pity on my poor Wife
'which is deny'd to me, and my last flying Breath shall
'bless you. I have but one Thing to repent of since my
'Sentence, which is that I sent the Ring by *Nottingham*,
'fearing it should once put my Queen in mind of her bro-
'ken Vow.

Essex.

Repentance, Horrors, Plagues and deadly Poisons,
Worse than a thousand Deaths torment thy Soul.

C. *Not.* Madam——

Queen. Condemn me first to hear the Groans of Ghosts,
The Croaks of Ravens, and the Damn'd in Torments;
Just Heav'n, 'tis Musick to what thou canst utter,
Be gone—Fly to that utmost Verge of Earth,
Where the Globe's bounded with Eternity,
And never more be seen of human kind,
Curst with a long Life, and with a Fear to die,
With thy Guilt ever in thy memory;
And *Essex*' Ghost be still before thy Eye.

C. *Not.* I do confess——

Queen. Quick, bear her from my Sight, her Words are blasting,
Her Eyes are Basilisks, Infection reigns
Where'er she breathes; go shut her in a Cave,
Or chain her to some Rock whole Worlds from hence,
The Distance is too near: there let her live
Howling to th' Seas to rid her of her Pain,
For she and I must never meet again——
Away with her.

C. *Not.* I go——but have this Comfort in my Doom;
I leave you all with greater Plagues at home. [*Ex.* Notting.

Enter Burleigh *and* Raleigh.

Burl. Madam your Orders came too late——
The Earl was dead——

Queen. Then I wish thou wert dead that say'st it;
But I'll be just and curse none but my self——
What said he when he came so soon to die?

Burl. Indeed his End, made so by woful Casualties,
Was very sad and full of Pity,

But

But at the Block all Hero he appear'd,
Or elſe to give him a more Chriſtian Title,
A Martyr arm'd with Reſolution,
Said little, but did bleſs your Majeſty,
And dy'd full of Forgiveneſs to the World,
As was no doubt his Soul that ſoon expir'd.

Queen. Come thou choice Relict of lamented *Eſſex*,
Call me no more by th' Name of Queen, but Friend.
When thy dear Husband's Death reveng'd ſhall be,
Pity my Fate, but lay no Guilt on me;
Since 'tis the Almighty's Pleaſure, tho ſevere,
To puniſh thus his faithful Regents here,
To lay on Kings his hardeſt Task of Rule,
And yet has given 'em but a human Soul.
The ſubtle Paths of Traitors Hearts to view,
Reaſon's too dark, a hundred Eyes too few;
Yet when by Subjects we have been betray'd,
The Blame is ours, their Crimes on us are laid,
And that which makes a Monarch's Happineſs,
Is not in reigning well, but with Succeſs.

[*Exeunt Omnes*

EPI-

EPILOGUE

By Mr. *Dryden.*

WE act by Fits and Starts, like drowning Men,
But juſt peep up, and then drop down again;
Let thoſe who call us wicked change their Senſe,
For never Men liv'd more on Providence,
Not Lott'ry Cavaliers are half ſo poor,
Nor broken Cits, nor a Vacation Whore,
Nor Courts nor Courtiers living on the Rents
Of the three laſt ungiving Parliaments.
So wretched, that if Pharaoh *could divine,*
He might have ſpar'd his Dream of ſeven lean Kine,
And chang'd the Viſion for the Muſes Nine.
The Comet which portends a Dearth,
Was but a Vapour drawn from Play-Houſe Earth,
Sent here ſince our laſt Fire, and Lilly *ſays,*
Foreſhows our change of State and thin Third Days.
'Tis not our want of Wit that keeps us poor,
For then the Printers Preſs would ſuffer more:
Their Pamphleteers their Venom daily ſpit,
They thrive by Treaſon, and we ſtarve by Wit.

Coneſs

EPILOGUE.

Confeſs the Truth, which of you has not laid

[To the upper Gallery.

Four Farthings out to buy the Hatfield *Maid?*
Or what is duller yet, and more does ſpite us,
Democritus *his Wars with* Heraclitus?
Theſe are the Authors that have run us down,
And exerciſe your Criticks of the Town;
Yet theſe are Pearls to your lampooning Rhimes,
Y' abuſe your ſelves more dully than the Times;
Scandal *the Glory of the* Engliſh *Nation,*
Is worn to Rags, and ſcribbl'd out of Faſhion;
Such harmleſs Thruſts, as if like Fencers wiſe,
You had agreed your Play before the Prize.
Faith, you may hang your Harps upon the Willows,
'Tis juſt like Children when they box with Pillows.
Then put an end to Civil War for Shame,
Let each Knight Errant who has wrong'd a Dame,
Throw down his Pen, and give her if he can,
The Satisfaction of a Gentleman.

PRO-

PROLOGUE,

Intended to be ſpoke.

Written by the AUTHOR.

'TIS ſaid when the Renown'd Auguſtus *reign'd,*
That all the World in Peace and Wealth remaind
And tho the School of Action, War, was o'er,
Arms, Arts, and Letters then increas'd the more.
All theſe ſprung from our Royal Virgin's Bays,
And flouriſh'd better than in Cæſar's *Days;*
And only in her time at once was ſeen
So brave a Soldier, Stateſman, and a Queen. Eſſex *and*
Her Reign may be compar'd to that above, Burleigh
As the beſt Poet, Cæſar's *did to* Jove:
For as great Julius *built the mighty Throne,*
And left Rome's *firſt large Empire to his Son,*
Under whoſe weight, till her time, we did groan;
So her great Father was the firſt that ſtruck
Rome's *Triple Crown; but ſhe threw off the Yoke:*
Straight at her Birth new Light the Heavens adorn'd,
Which more than Fifteen Hundred Years had mourn'd—

But

PROLOGUE.

But hold, I'm bid to let you understand
That when our Poet took this Work in hand.
He trembl'd straight, like Prophets in a Dream,
Her awful Genius stood, and threaten'd him,
Her modest Beauties only he has shown,
And has her Character so nicely drawn,
That if her self in purest Robes of Light,
Shou'd come from Heav'n and bless us with her Sight,
She wou'd not blush to hear what he has writ.
Therefore———
To all the shining Sex this Play's addrest,
But more the Court, the Planets of the Rest;
You who on Earth are Men's best, softest Fate,
So that when Heav'n with some rough Piece has met,
It sends him you to mould, and new create.
Strange Ways to Virtue, some may think to prove,
But yet the best and surest Path is Love;
Love like the Ermine, is so nice a Guest,
It never enters in a vitious Breast———
If you are pleas'd, we will be bold to say,
This modest Poem is the Ladies Play.

FINIS.

B L